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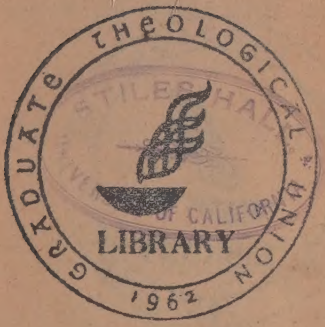
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LETTERS

ON THE

THEOLOGY OF THE NEW CHURCH

SIGNIFIED BY

THE NEW JERUSALEM,

(Rev. XXI., XXII.)

ADDRESSED, IN A DISCUSSION, TO THE [illegible] OF THE "CHRISTIAN WEEKLY [illegible]

STILES HALL, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

BY

REV. J. H. SMITHSON,

MINISTER OF THE NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH, PETER STREET, MANCHESTER, AND FORMERLY A MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BASEL.

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AMERICAN EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE following Letters were first published in England several years ago in a weekly religious paper. They attracted considerable attention at the time, and were the means of interesting quite a number of persons in the doctrines of the New Church. They present several of its leading doctrines in a clear and forcible manner, and in such striking contrast with the Old, as can scarcely fail to carry conviction to the mind of the average reader, and impress him with the truth and beauty of the New.

And the author's argument is not a little strengthened by the admirable spirit manifested on his part throughout the discussion. The voluntary retirement of both his opponents before

the discussion was finally concluded, was a virtual confession of defeat on their part, or of the utter inability of the Old doctrines to stand against the New in a fair and open field.

As these Letters have already rendered valuable service to the New Church in England, it is hoped and believed that they may be not less acceptable and serviceable in America; and in this hope they have been chosen to make one volume in our "Popular Series."

The American Editor has added page heads which are sometimes a convenience to the reader, and a brief heading to each Letter indicative of the subject or subjects therein discussed. He has also omitted the synopsis of the Letters in the body of the work, but retained them in the Contents as given by the author. He has appended to Letter IX. a few extracts from the writings of Martin Luther which, considering the wide diffusion of the great Reformer's(?) teachings, are sufficient to show the need there was of another reformation in Christian Theology. He has, for

reasons not necessary to state here, omitted one or two paragraphs in the author's "concluding remarks." With these few and unimportant exceptions, the work is an exact reprint of the English edition.

B. F. B.

GERMANTOWN, Oct. 19, 1882.

PREFACE.

THE Editor of "The Christian Weekly News," an ably conducted and liberal Paper, consented, under certain conditions, to admit of a discussion in his pages on the subject of New Church Theology. In a letter to a gentleman who had addressed him on the subject, the Editor favored him with the following truly courteous reply:

"SIR:—I am so calmly confident in the ultimate triumph of Divine Truth over every form of error with which poor humanity is perplexed, so deeply conscious of my own unfitness to dictate the faith of any man, and so thoroughly convinced of the usefulness of *properly conducted* discussion, that I have, as you know, thrown open the correspondence department of my Newspaper for that purpose.

"In reply to your letter, therefore, requesting room for a courteous discussion on the doctrines of the 'New Church,' I say: Certainly; but, as in the controversy between Atheism and Faith, recently concluded, so in this case, I submit a few conditions:

"1. Let the representative of Swedenborgian Theology be a gentleman whom the respectable and intelligent adherents of that system will accept, generally, as a representative.

"2. Let his object be Truth, and not victory.

"3. Let his spirit become the Christian profession.

"4. Let his name be communicated to me, either for publication or for my own satisfaction, as *he* pleases.

"On my part, I will undertake to find a gentleman to represent what is called Orthodoxy, and who, of course, will agree to the same conditions.

"If your friend convince my other correspondent of error in any doctrine of his faith, he will yield and say so.

"I have only to add, that *personally* I should be glad to see an *intelligent exposition* of New Church doctrines; an exposition which everybody could understand; and that a discussion between fellow believers will be far more agreeable to my feelings than that to which I have referred.

"If you wish the letter you sent published, say so and it shall be done. One column of the paper is the extent that I can allow for each letter, and as it will save a great deal of time and repetition if letters and reply always appear *simultaneously*, you will kindly send your communication a week before the expected time of publication.

"I shall in a 'leader' call attention to the discussion as soon as it is decided upon, and I take it for granted that you will make it known, by any means

you please, to your friends, so that they may purchase the paper, and not allow the space to be occupied at my expense with matter which may possibly displace or exclude articles more in harmony with the tastes of my constituency. To your own sense of right I can safely leave this. I am, Sir,

"Yours very truly,
"W. L."

"Having thus (says the Gentleman) prepared the way, I can only leave it in the hands of those most interested in the maintenance and public advocacy of our Heavenly Doctrines to avail themselves of so auspicious and liberal an opening, and to have the New Church represented in an efficient manner."

The discussion commenced in February, 1856, by the writer on the part of the New Church, signing himself "A. V." (*Amator Veritatis*); and terminated September 23d. Many subjects were discussed, and much interest was awakened in the controversy wherever the Paper was read. Quite a new class of readers has been secured in localities where the Paper is received, and the doctrines and truths of the New Church Theology have been permitted to flow in new channels, which it is hoped may awaken interest and inquiry as to the important subjects thus brought before the public.

Two opponents, "C. B." and "C. D.," encountered the New Church advocate, "A. V.," but both

left "A. V." in possession of the field prior to the termination of the contest. Several important doctrines, such as the Atonement, the Justification of the sinner before God, the true Doctrine of Salvation by the Cross, were scarcely opposed by the advocates of the so-called orthodoxy. The former, or "C. B.," was at length reduced to the necessity of saying that "he would not defend or justify the Athanasian Creed," which, nevertheless, is the great bulwark of orthodoxy; for, take the creed away, and the prevailing theology tumbles to pieces. Much stress, however, was laid by the latter defendant on the resurrection of the same body, although this idea has long since been given up, even by many of the most learned theologians of his own persuasion. At length "C. D.," giving up all argument, indulged in mere assertion, and endeavored to gain ground in popular estimation by irony and abuse. This, however, did not serve him, still less the cause which he pretended to defend. He asked a series of questions respecting spiritual substances and spiritual conditions, which he imagined could not be answered. Here again he was foiled, not knowing the spiritual intelligence which the doctrines of the New Church confer upon those who thoroughly understand them. The questions were answered, and as far as we have heard, in a manner satisfac-

tory to all reflecting minds. More elucidations might certainly have been given, if space had permitted.

It is supposed by some that these two champions of the prevailing theology, although picked men, did not prove themselves competent to the defence with which they were entrusted. But had more able hands come forward, there is every reason to conclude that they would, if not in their own estimation, at least in that of impartial and reflecting minds, have been equally defeated.

Several inquiries having been made as to the publication of these Letters, it was thought that they should, instead of being buried where they now are, be brought out and made accessible to all. As the doctrines of the New Church will have, for generations to come, to fight their way through opposing falsities and erroneous dogmas, it is evident that whatever useful weapons can be added to the armory of Truth, will be of service in the polemics of the New Church. A Gentleman, impressed with this idea, generously proposed to assist in the publication of these Letters. They consequently have been thoroughly revised, and form a small volume, which may not only be useful, under the Lord's Providence, in defending the Doctrines, but likewise a suitable medium of introducing them to inquiring minds.

Two supplementary Letters, intended for inser-

tion in "The Christian Weekly News," had the discussion continued, have been added;—one on the "Nature of Future Rewards and Punishments," and the other on "Angels and Evil Spirits." To the latter is added, in a Postscript, a critical examination of the passages in 2 Peter ii. 4, and Jude 6, 7, which are supposed to teach the "Fall of Angels," but which, as demonstrated from the highest authorities, by no means teach such a doctrine.

During the discussion, the more prominent objections to the Doctrines of the New Church were especially considered, and, it is thought, successfully confuted; minor points which, on reflection, bear with them their own refutation, were either omitted, or only incidentally considered. The entire series of Letters is especially commended to the attention of candid and truth-seeking minds.

J. H. S.

CONTENTS.

LETTER I.

THE CORNER-STONE OF CHRISTIANITY.

PAGE

Nature and Importance of the Discussion—Preliminaries —Postulates to be granted, 1. The Word of God the only Source from which all Doctrine must be drawn, and by which it must be confirmed —2. Recognition of two classes of ideas, Material and Immaterial or Spiritual—The true *Idea* of God the first principle of true Theology—The true *Idea* stated—The idea of three Persons, as maintained by the Athanasian or Orthodox Creed, destructive of the idea of God as one, and the cause of great desolation in the church—Trinity not of Persons, but of three Essentials in one Person, who is the Lord Jesus Christ 25

LETTER II.

THIS STONE REJECTED BY THE BUILDERS.

Alleged Truth and Harmony in the present system of Theology—Refuted by Facts—New Ideas not at once received—No new Revelation required, but a better understanding of God's Word is required—Progress in spiritual and religious Knowledge—A new development of Truth from the Scriptures required to meet the growing requirements of the human Mind—Ptolemaic system of Astronomy founded on appearances—Galileo and Newton founded it on genuine Truths—The prevailing Theology founded on *appearances* of Truth, and not on *genuine* Truth—Swedenborg has done for Theology what Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton have done for Astronomy—Luther and Wesley ex-

PAGE

traordinary Instruments of God's Providence in Religion—Swedenborg a still more extraordinary Instrument—Theology and Science harmonized by Swedenborg—Use of Terms—The Divine Humanity of Jesus the Corner-stone and the Crown of Christianity—This stone rejected by the Builders, proved to be the foundation and the All in All of Doctrine and of Life in Christianity 34

LETTER III.

THE DIVINE HUMANITY AND REDEMPTION.

Progress in the Knowledge of Truth admitted—A new *Idea* of Jesus requisite to Progress—This *Idea* advocated in the New Church—Orthodoxy so called preaches another Gospel than that advocated by the Apostle—The Mormons quite opposed to the New Church—Mormonism an outgrowth of the corrupted state of Christianity—The Apostolic Churches not perfect—The Resurrection—The Holy Spirit not a Person—The prevailing Theology interiorly acknowledges three Gods—Christianity cannot possibly exist in its true character without an acknowledgment of the Lord in his Divine Humanity—Arguments in proof of this, in former letters, remain intact—The Lord's Glorification the pattern of our Regeneration—Man the subject of two Humanities—The Deist and Pantheist—A God invisible to our Faith not the God of Christianity—The Lord spake of the Father and the Son in proverbs—A Proverb not to be taken literally—A child's ideas to be put away, and to give place to the ideas of rational manhood—The relation between the Father and the Son, as taught by the Lord and the Apostle—The Lord not only the Medium but the Object of Worship—Redemption—The Redeemer—Meaning of Redemption 46

LETTER IV.

A TRUE IDEA OF GOD—ITS IMPORTANCE.

Clearer and more enlightened views of Jesus required—Only to be found in the doctrines of the New Church

PAGE

Death-bed Repentance or Confession of no avail, but the Repentance and the Confession in the daily life—One great object of this Discussion—What the Gospel teaches in respect to the Lord—Relation of the Father to the Son—No substance without a form—Spiritual substances, and still more divine substances, infinitely exalted above the properties and laws of matter—Celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies—Spirit more substantial than matter—The cause more substantial than the effect; the Prior than the Posterior; Heavenly things than earthly—Properties of earthly things employed to designate, by correspondence, the quality of Spiritual things—The Spiritual things seen by the prophets as substantial to them as natural things seen by men—Other arguments in proof of the Divine Humanity—A clause in the Athanasian Creed adduced to prove it—Thomas acknowledges Jesus, after his resurrection, as his Lord and God—And this in his Humanity—Also Paul and John in the Epistles..... 58

LETTER V.

CHURCH COUNCILS; DIVINITY AND HUMANITY; A TRUE PSYCHOLOGY NEEDED.

The right spirit of discussion—The spirit and life of the New Church—Early Church Councils—The New Church acknowledges only one Church Council, the prophets and apostles with the Lord as their head; also only one Rule of Faith, the Divine Word—The greatest absurdities enacted by Church Councils—Christ admitted to be wholly God and wholly Man—The consequence of this admission—The Council of Alexandria defined the term *hypostasis*, or person, as being an "individual existence," thus giving rise to the idea of three gods—Thomas's declaration of Jesus Christ as the one Personal God—The light of the New Church contrasted with the darkness of the decisions of ancient and modern Church Councils—True idea of the Lord as Mediator—What is meant by Christ being "in all things like unto his brethren"?—Had he a human soul?—His *anima* was divine, not human, but his *animus* in the humanity from the mother was, prior to glorification, human, but not afterwards—A true psychology—No term in English so indeterminate as the term *soul*—Explained—

PAGE

The *anima*, the *mens*, and the *animus*—The Athanasian Creed, the bulwark of Orthodoxy, abandoned by the opponent—A concession to our arguments—Operation, or activity, an essential part of man—We receive of God's fulness, but "all the fulness of the Godhead can only dwell bodily" in Him whose Humanity or Body is divine 74

LETTER VI.

THE TRINITY IN ONE DIVINE PERSON.

Church Councils—Present state of the Discussion—Man receives *of* God's fulness—He cannot receive *all* God's fulness—the Lord only by glorification received all this fulness in his Humanity—No sanction in Scripture to pray to God for Christ's sake—A wrong translation corrected—The common version of the Scriptures—Prayer in the Lord's name—The Holy Spirit; a right idea of immense importance—Meaning of the term Spirit—Not a separate Person from the Lord—His own divine operation—Important distinction between the Spirit of God mentioned in the Old Testament, and the Holy Spirit in the New—The true idea of the Holy Spirit given by the Lord when He breathed upon his disciples—The Spirit identified with the Lord himself—Why a dove appeared at the Lord's baptism—Personification common in Scripture—Things personified not persons—Examples—The idea of the Holy Spirit as a Person founded upon no declaration of Scripture, but on mere inferences, and on Church Councils, a fallacious ground of argument—The New Church founds its idea on this subject upon a direct declaration of the Lord—The Comforter or Paraclete identified with the Lord—Predicates of the Spirit not applicable to a Person—The Lord operates and dwells in his people not as a Person, but by his Spirit 91

LETTER VII.

THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT.

The prevailing theology not able to explain the Lord's declaration that "the Holy Spirit was not yet," etc.—

PAGE

Two tests whether a system be truly Christian and Evangelical or not—The doctrine of the Atonement; its importance—No true understanding of Christianity without it—The doctrine stated—Meaning of Atonement—All true worship based by the Lord on Atonement—Love the source of Atonement—The necessity of Atonement—The Being who accomplished it—Not a second Person, but God himself as the one only Person of the Godhead—The means by which the Atonement was effected—He first abolished the enmity in his own flesh, or glorified the Humanity He assumed—He thereby prepared the way of abolishing the enmity in all mankind—This effect follows on all those who come unto Him and obey Him—The doctrine of the prevailing theology contrasted with the view here given—Its opposition to Scripture demonstrated—Not reconcilable with reason—Injurious tendency of the prevailing doctrine—Beneficial tendency of the New Church doctrine—Worthy of all acceptation 105

LETTER VIII.

RECONCILIATION, SACRIFICE AND JUSTIFICATION.

Truth does not suffer by friendly discussion—Clearer and more spiritual views required in theology—Heads of the Atonement recapitulated—Meaning of *satisfaction* and *substitution*—No vindictive justice in God—The Prodigal Son, a specimen of true conversion, and of actual repentance—But the power by which repentance is done is from the Lord—He performed the work of redemption and atonement to enable man to repent, or to work out his own salvation—The sufferings of Christ not *penal* but *purificatory*—An important distinction, not made by the prevailing theology—A sacrifice does not involve a vicarious substitute—Vindictive justice in God a great error—True doctrine of justification—The Lord's redemption and glorification or atonement, the only ground of our justification—How man becomes justified—Justification and righteousness the same term in Greek—Genuine and spurious righteousness—Dead works and good works—Justification by faith only an enormous error—The merits of Christ as being infinite can no more be attributed to man than his omnipotence 117

LETTER IX.

THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF THE CROSS EXPLAINED.

PAGE

The doctrine of the Church of the New Jerusalem founded exclusively upon Scripture, and not, as is commonly supposed, on any revelations made to Swedenborg—Salvation by the Cross; a true idea of which most important—The Cross as an instrument of punishment—Several kinds of punishment among the Jews—Explained—Every sin has its own punishment—Great error of supposing that the sufferings of the Redeemer were inflicted upon him by God as a first Person—The Lord's suffering not penal, or as a consequence of sin, but purificatory—True application of the Cross—Why Christianity is called the religion of the Cross—The doctrine of the Cross as understood by the Primitive Christians—As understood in the middle ages—At the Reformation, quite erroneous—The true meaning restored in the doctrine of the New Church—The suffering on the Cross, the Lord's final temptation and agony—Great error to suppose that the passion of the Cross was redemption—It was the final temptation by which redemption was accomplished—Anti-evangelical tendencies of the prevailing doctrine of the Cross—Practical and saving tendency of the New Church doctrine on this subject—Repentance—Its meaning and importance—Excluded from the prevailing theology as the practical means of salvation—Its nature and necessity—The only means of securing the benefits of Redemption and Atonement—No faith, no love, no holiness which does not spring from Repentance as its Evangelical ground..... 127

[APPENDIX BY THE AMERICAN EDITOR.]..... 140

LETTER X.

DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION.

Death and the Resurrection—No change as to man's governing love can be effected after death—A man loves his nature contracted in the world, and after death will not change it; no more than a lamb, a wolf, or a viper is willing to change its nature in this world—Pleasures of sin in this world changed after death into the miseries

PAGE

of hell—Three ideas of death presented in God's Word—Important to form a true idea on this subject—A true idea of life important—Resurrection—A twofold death mentioned in Scripture, also a twofold resurrection—The Lord gives the entire doctrine of the Resurrection in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus—The natural body and the spiritual body—Man rises immediately after death—The common notion of a future general resurrection of dead bodies groundless—Neither scriptural nor rational—Full of darkness and devoid of consolation—Affording no persuasive to holiness of life—The New Church doctrine full of light and consolation, and of every inducement to a holy life 145

LETTER XI.

SPIRITUAL DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

A new opponent—No mysticism, no blind faith tolerated in the light of the New Jerusalem—Conditions of real progress—Genuine enlightenment—The death of the body and the death of the soul—Great evils caused by an erroneous and sensual theology—Resurrection of the Spirit from the body, to be distinguished from the resurrection of the Spirit from the death of sin—Certain passages of Scripture supposed to support the idea of a resurrection of dead bodies, considered—No such an idea involved in the said passages..... 153

LETTER XII.

LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE.

The unprejudiced reader not to be misled by the cry of "Swedenborgianism"—The real question—The life after death—Heaven and Hell—The mind naturally desires to know this subject—Man rises in the spiritual world at death—All the truths of man's resurrection revealed in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus—He rises immediately at death—Is in a human form, the spiritual body—His lot determined by his previous life—The thief on the Cross—The spirit of Samuel—This idea of man's resurrection most rational and con-

PAGE

soling—Dr. Whately and his unconscious sleep for thousands of years most unscriptural and irrational—The Apostle confirms the New Church doctrine on this subject—Man in this life organizes his spirit either for good or for evil—Heaven open to all—But none can enter except those who are prepared by regeneration—Heaven and Hell near to us—Man must, through the Lord's power, resist and overcome evil—"He must fight the good fight of faith"—The fire of hell—What?—"The worm that dieth not"—What? 161

LETTER XIII.

SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT MAN'S SPIRIT AND SPIRITUAL SUBSTANCE ANSWERED.

Vituperation is not argument—The right spirit of controversy—The spirit is the man, not the body—A spiritual body suited to the spiritual world—Why do some ministers still advocate the resurrection of the body? Because it is popular—Many doctrines at one time popular, not so now—Spirits of just men made *perfect* in heaven, without being again united to their material bodies—The material body therefore not necessary to the perfection of the spirit—Scriptural Truth supremely rational—The stronghold of bigotry—What?—Certain questions answered—The spirit in a human form—The organism of the body not simply one, but like the body harmonically one—The properties of a spiritual substance—Laws and conditions of spiritual substances—The spiritual body has organs of sense of which the senses of the natural body are the mere instruments—Proved from Scripture 170

LETTER XIV.

FUTURE REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS EXPLAINED.

Future rewards and punishments—A true idea of which of great importance—most practical—What a man sows here he reaps hereafter—Works of the flesh—Fruits of the spirit—God's order and the laws by which He acts unchangeable—End for which man is created—Nature of rewards and punishments in this life; civil, moral

PAGE

and physical—These laws as to their essential principles unchangeable—Rewards attending the observance of these laws—Miseries attending their violation—Man free—What *health* is to the body, *salvation* is to the soul—Laws of spiritual health or salvation unchangeable; revealed in the Word—Necessity of a divine revelation—The ancients had a revelation—Obedience to revealed truths the condition of salvation—Predestination, or God's arbitrary decree, most unscriptural and irrational—Calvinistic theology—All good from God has within it its own reward; all evil from hell its own misery—This reward whilst here in the inward man—Cares, anxieties and ailments of our external man, means of spiritual training—After death the happiness in the internal comes forth in the external—An evil nature, how contracted—Remains after death unchangeable—The pleasures of sin changed into infernal miseries—Evil subdued by the punishment inherent in its nature—Action and reaction—The law of retaliation—All power to obey is from the Lord..... 177

LETTER XV.

GUARDIAN ANGELS AND EVIL SPIRITS.

Guardian angels and evil spirits—Their proximity to man—This doctrine truly practical—Source of knowledge on this subject—The Scripture plainly teaches it—Angels in constant attendance upon man—In his infancy—In temptations—When repenting—When dying—At his resurrection—They inspire us with heavenly emotions—The Lord had angels attendant upon Him—Not that He required their aid—What is an angel? The spirit of a just man made perfect in heaven—The spiritual body not subject to the laws of matter—For what end do we exist here—The world the seminary of heaven—How a man lives for heaven—Angels always seen as men—Why represented with wings—Nothing made for itself—The mineral kingdom made for the vegetable kingdom—This for the animal—This for man—Thus all for man, through whom by acts of gratitude and worship they ascend to God—All things mediums of good—Every holy and pure thought from the Lord through angels—Man bound to resist evil suggestions—What is an evil spirit? A man in a state of misery

PAGE

and despair brought upon himself—The human soul—What it is—Governing principle of the life not changed after death—For what the Lord came into the world—Man does not derive his thoughts from himself—Every unholy thought a proof of the proximity of unclean spirits—Confederacy with hell, how broken—Man's individual redemption an image of redemption itself—The Word the only power against evil spirits—The Lord in his Divine Humanity the only Saviour from sin—Thus Jesus alone has the power to subject evil, and to deliver us from the bondage of evil spirits..... 191

POSTSCRIPT.

ANGELS NOT CREATED SUCH.

Supposed existence of angels prior to the creation of man—The meaning of the term *angel* as employed in Scripture—Angels in Scripture also signify men as messengers—Not exclusively confined to the inhabitants of heaven—The passages in Peter and Jude in which the fall of angels is supposed to be taught, considered—Proved from the passages themselves that they do not teach such a doctrine—Further proved from the most esteemed writers, Augustin, Chrysostom, Cyrillus and Theodoret, that the said passages do not teach that doctrine—Demonstrated what they do teach—The fall of the posterity of Adam, and of Noah, and not the fall of angels from heaven..... 208

LETTER XVI.

A FEW MORE QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

Irony not proper on solemn subjects—We have no intelligence in spiritual things if we cannot in some degree define them, and understand their properties—Further elucidations desired—The form of man's spirit, or the spiritual body, if regenerate and good, perfectly human and beautiful—But if evil it is monstrous according to the nature of the evil which governs it—The material body does not, but in a slight degree, assume a form according to the moral qualities of its spirit—The essential difference between spirit and matter is the same as

PAGE

between mind and body—Divisibility, as applied to matter, cannot be applied to man's spirit, but in the sense of *analysis* it can be applied—Material properties, such as hard, soft, bitter, sweet, etc., cannot, but by way of analogy or correspondence, be applied to a spiritual substance—The Word of God full of expressions taken from material things, to denote spiritual properties—Also common language—The fact instinctively perceived by all minds—A doctrine founded on the *symbol* and not on the thing *symbolized* is false—The nature of spiritual forms—The materialists, their fallacious doctrines—All who deny a spiritual substance, although called Christians, advocate nevertheless the cause of materialism and infidelity—The law by which the union of the body and the spirit is maintained..... 218

LETTER XVII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Conclusion—The prevailing theology—The Ptolemaic and Copernican systems of astronomy.—The prevailing tenets of theology founded on the tri personal system, demonstrated to be false—No enlightened progress but in the path of genuine Truth—Irony and vituperation not argument—A system having recourse to such weapons not sound, but rotten and groundless—The Church of the New Jerusalem a system of Doctrine as a city compact together—A missionary in India—The two bodily aspects; the Son of God, and the Son of Mary—The Divine Humanity and the infirm humanity—Final appeal to the readers of the Christian Weekly News—Compliments to the liberality of its Editor..... 225

CORRESPONDENCE.

DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM.

LETTER I.

THE CORNER-STONE OF CHRISTIANITY.

TO the Editor of "*The Christian Weekly News.*"

SIR:—Having understood that you are willing to admit into your liberal paper a discussion on the Theology of the New Church, understood by the New Jerusalem in the Revelation, as a renovated system of Christian doctrine and life, I beg to say that, with full approval of the conditions you have mentioned, in a letter to a gentleman on the subject,* I have taken the liberty to send you the first article, which will open the discussion. This discussion—to be conducted, we trust, in the spirit of that "truth which speaketh from love"—is of importance, when it is considered that an increasing number of persons, both in Europe and America, and also in other parts of the world, are receiving these doctrines as what they verily believe to be the true doctrines of Christianity.

* See Preface.

Before, however, we commence, it may be well to state certain preliminaries, which as postulates will, I doubt not, be conceded by those who enter upon the discussion.

First, it will be granted on both sides that the Word of God is the only source of all divine and spiritual knowledge, and that from it must be derived, and by it must be confirmed, all principles of Christian doctrine, faith and life. This postulate, of course, excludes all things of a merely human origin, such as creeds, symbols, and articles of faith, and rests the entire controversy solely upon the Word of God as its proper basis.

Secondly, as to *ideas*, which are the elements of all intelligence and upon which all discussion depends, it will also, I think, be conceded that in agreement with all systems of logic as maintained by Locke, Watts, Kant and other logicians, there are two classes of ideas which every mind, and especially every thinking mind, entertains, namely, *material* or *sensuous* ideas, and *immaterial* or *intellectual* ideas, which also may be called *spiritual* ideas. Those two classes of ideas are not only maintained by logicians, or by such as know anything of the human mind and its operations, but they are clearly deducible from the Word of God itself; and therefore, in maintaining these two classes of ideas, we are not departing from our first postulate, which requires everything in the discussion to be founded upon its teaching and authority. For example, when Jesus declared that "except we eat his flesh and drink his blood we have no life in us," the Jews formed only a gross material

idea of what He had said, and exclaimed, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" But Jesus corrected this material idea by saying that "his words are spirit and life," and not flesh, "for the flesh profiteth nothing;" showing that it was with an *immaterial* or *spiritual* idea, and not with a *material* idea, that we should understand his sayings, and this because it is expressly said that "He spake nothing without a parable."

Again, when Jesus told his disciples "to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees," they thought that "it was because they had taken *no bread*." Thus they had an *idea* of bread, which was material, but afterwards they saw that "He bade them not beware of the leaven of *bread*, but of the *doctrine* of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Thus whilst the disciples had an idea of *bread*, the Lord had an idea of *doctrine*, which is quite a different idea. But the Lord's idea is the true idea, which the church by its doctrine ought to teach, and not the gross *material* idea.

Many other instances might also be adduced to show that the Scriptures themselves plainly indicate these two classes of ideas. It will also, no doubt, be admitted that God, by the influx of his life, "as the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," not only gives us the power to think, but that by his Spirit He also illustrates the ideas of our thought, in proportion as they are founded in truth.

Now, the first and most essential principle in theology is a true *idea* of God. If this idea is correct, all other subjects of doctrine will more or less par-

take of the clearness; but if this idea is erroneous, all things in the theological system we embrace will partake of the error. The New Church maintains that the true idea of God is that of the Lord Jesus Christ in his "Glorious Body," or Divine Humanity. It is expressly declared that "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" it therefore inevitably follows that, if "all the fulness of the Godhead, or Deity, dwells in Him bodily," there can be but ONE PERSON of the Godhead. The New Church, in consequence, considers that the Athanasian doctrine of three Persons in the Godhead, which is so commonly believed, is a most fatally erroneous dogma, because it destroys in the minds of nearly all who believe it the idea that God is ONE, which is the foundation of all true religion. Hence from the fourth century this doctrine has been the cause of so much darkness and of so many bitter controversies in the church. Whereas, had the true idea of God been maintained, there is every reason to believe that this darkness, and this state of discord and hatred, would have been to a great extent avoided.

The common belief, as expressed in the Athanasian creed, says, "As we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by *himself* to be God and Lord, so are we forbidden by the Catholic religion to say there be three Gods or three Lords." This sentence, which expresses the central idea of the creed, inculcates the acknowledgment or belief of three Gods in the thought, but forbids the mouth to say so. The consequence is that a very great majority who worship and think

according to this creed have the idea of three Gods deeply impressed in their thoughts; but that this idea is destructive of the true idea of God as ONE, we need not stop to demonstrate. Although the Athanasian creed is not read among all the dissenting denominations, yet wherever the doctrine of Three Persons in the Deity is acknowledged, the same fact obtains, that in their thought they have a notion of three Gods. Many who have been delivered from this erroneous dogma have confessed that they had conceived a notion of three Gods.

But it may be replied, that with your idea of one Person in the Godhead, who is Jesus Christ in his "Glorious Body," or Divine Humanity, you must necessarily deny the Trinity. By no means. A Trinity in God is essential to the existence of God; and therefore a knowledge of the Trinity is essential to a true idea of God, for the Trinity may be called the "fulness of the Godhead;" but as Paul expressly declares "that all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Jesus Christ," it follows that the Trinity dwells also in Him. Not, indeed, a Trinity of Persons, but a Trinity of *Essentials*. We say *Essentials*, because there are three essentials necessary to constitute any one given thing. Thus, to form a man, who is divinely said to be created in the image of God, the first Essential is his soul, the second his body, and the third his operation or his activity in life. We call them *Essentials*, because, take away any one of these necessary constituents of his being, and he would cease to be a man. The same may be said of the sun, which is also an image

of God as the "Sun of Righteousness." The first *Essential* is its *heat*, the second its *light*, and the third its vivifying *operation* upon all things in nature. And, universally, everything, in order to be a *thing*, has its essence, its form, and its uses. It is thus that "the invisible things of God" (even the Trinity), as the Apostle says, "are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." The Trinity, according to the idea of Three Persons, is always considered, and truly, to be incomprehensible and an impenetrable mystery. But the Lord says that to his disciples "is given *to know* the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," consequently, the mystery of the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity is *not* one of the mysteries, that is, of the essential truths, of his kingdom.

The Lord declares that the "Father dwells in Him;" and He also says that he that "seeth Him seeth the Father;" and again, that "He and the Father are one." These and other declarations of similar import show us that the Father dwells in the Son, as the soul dwells in the body, and that the nature of the *oneness* between them is that of the *oneness* or union of the soul and the body. As the doctrine of Three Persons in the Godhead forms the basis and bulwark of orthodoxy so called, it is obvious that the discussion must not only commence here, but that the foundation must be decided before we can proceed to discuss the other great doctrines of Christianity, such as the Atonement, Redemption, etc. The position, therefore, we maintain as the foundation of all true orthodoxy is, that there

is *One Person* in the Godhead, and not three—"Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is ONE Lord;" and that that One Person is the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead, or the Divine Trinity, dwells bodily.

But my opponent will, no doubt, and reasonably, ask—"How, then, do you reconcile all those passages in the Gospel, in which Jesus speaks of the Father as separate from himself, and as (in his agony on the cross) having forsaken Him?" These passages are easily explained as consistent with the idea of one Person. For Jesus took upon himself "the likeness of sinful flesh," "the form of a servant;" "He humbled himself," etc. In this state of humiliation He bore our "infirmities and our sicknesses," and "was laden with our iniquities," etc. Now, in this state of humiliation, or of merely human consciousness, He prays to the Father, or to the Divinity within Him; implores help, declares "that of his own self He can do nothing," and in the deepest temptation on the cross expresses himself as being in a state of despair. But when in his state of glorification, or in his state of divine consciousness, He claims equality and oneness with the Father, and says—"All things that the Father hath are mine;" "I and the Father are one;" "He that seeth me hath seen the Father;" "He that seeth me seeth Him that sent me," etc. He was, whilst in the world, alternately in these states of humiliation and glorification, which are distinctly marked in the Gospels.

To draw any arguments, therefore, from what Jesus says of himself in his state of humiliation,

against his Divinity, as the Socinians do, is most erroneous. But as Jesus, after his resurrection, was in a state of glorification only, He no longer prays to the Father, but is altogether one with the Father, as the soul is one with the body. After his resurrection "He breathed upon his disciples and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." This shows us plainly that the Holy Spirit is the divine operation of Jesus, and that it proceeds from Him in his Divine Person or "Glorious Body." The Holy Spirit is therefore his living action upon us, "by which He works within us, if we do not quench or resist the Spirit," the blessings of regeneration and salvation.

Lastly, it will follow from what has been said, that the Humanity or "Glorious Body" of Jesus must by no means be considered as like the humanity or body of a man, or of an angel, but that it is Divine, as being the seat "of the fulness of the Godhead," and that Jesus with his "Glorious Body" hath "ascended far above all heavens that He might fill all things," and exercise "all power in heaven and on earth." (Matt. xxviii. 18.)

Thus the New Church maintains as the fundamental truth, the "precious Corner-Stone" of Christianity, that there is one Person of the Godhead in whom "all the fulness of the Deity dwells bodily," and that this one Person is the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the one only true Object of worship; that "at his name every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth;" and that we must, through faith and love, "eat his Flesh and drink his Blood," or, become

receptive of his divine Love and Truth, in order that we may have heavenly life within us, and thus be saved. We also believe that it is mainly owing to the rejection of this precious Corner-Stone—this fundamental truth, through the establishment of three Persons in the Trinity—that Christianity has for ages past, both as to doctrine and life, been in a most desolate and ruined condition; and that it can only be restored by establishing this Stone as the "precious Corner-Stone which the builders have rejected."

I am, etc. A. V. .

C

LETTER II.

THIS STONE REJECTED BY THE BUILDERS.

SIR:—In my opponent's reply to my first letter, I have to thank him for his Christian courtesy and kindness. Your correspondent says,—

"'That it shall be his endeavor to show that *truth* and *harmony* dwell with those who have received a very different system [of theology] from that of Emanuel Swedenborg."

This assertion of your correspondent must, I think, awaken the astonishment of all who reflect that anything but *truth* and *harmony* dwells in the system which he undertakes to advocate. Where, for example, is the *harmony* of which he speaks among the conflicting sects? Is not the Church of England, whose thirty-nine articles are considered to be the bulwark of orthodoxy, at this moment rent asunder by the direst conflict of opinions as to many important articles of Faith? Is not Oxford at this moment agitated by bitter controversies respecting the Atonement (as in Mr. Jowett's case) and other articles of vital importance in respect to Theology? Where, then, is the harmony which, as C. B. asserts, exists in the so-called orthodoxy he would endeavor to maintain against the system of Theology as advo-

cated in the Church of the New Jerusalem? And among the denominations do we not behold the utmost confusion on many subjects of doctrine? Surely your correspondent, as a polemic, was off his guard when he claimed, as in the above words, *harmony* for the system he undertakes to defend!

I am perfectly aware that new principles and ideas in theology, although drawn exclusively, as I verily believe, from the Word of God, cannot *at once* be acknowledged as true by those who from their youth have been trained and brought up in other principles and doctrines. Hence the Lord says, "No man, having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new; for he saith, the old is better" (Luke v. 39), which implies that those who had been educated in the ideas and doctrines of the Jewish church, and who had *imbibed* those principles, could not *at once* receive the new ideas and doctrines which He was then teaching. For it will, no doubt, be at once admitted that the Lord does not in this passage mean the material idea of *old and new wine*, but the principles which the mind had drunk or *imbibed*, according to what was said in my former letter respecting the "leaven of bread," which in the Lord's idea signified not *bread*, but the *doctrine* of the Pharisees. (See p. 27.) But my friendly opponent admits the necessity of distinguishing between *material* or *sensuous* ideas and such as are *intellectual* and *spiritual*. Calm consideration and reflection are required for the reception of Truth.

The question between us is, not whether any new revelation of God's will is required—for we are per-

fectly agreed that the Scriptures contain, in all fulness, a revelation of the will and wisdom of God, to which nothing is required to be added—but the *question* is, whether we can now better *understand* that revelation than our ancestors did; whether we can now have a spiritual and more elevated "discernment" (1 Cor. ii. 14) of their divine contents than was formerly the case; in short, whether *progress* is predicable of religious and spiritual knowledge, as well as of all other kinds of knowledge. The New Church maintains that the creeds and symbols of former times are, although professedly founded upon the Scriptures, nevertheless quite a different thing from Scripture itself, and that the theology which those creeds and articles of faith embody is not the correct and true expression of God's Word; but that a better understanding of the Scriptures may now, through God's mercy, be obtained, in order to meet the growing requirements of the rational mind and to satisfy the awakened spirit of rational inquiry.

My respected opponent is fully aware, from his extensive knowledge of the literature of the day, that it is the growing opinion of the age that, unless the wants of the more fully developed and educated mind are now met and supplied, as to the solution of many points of Christian faith, either a rampant rationalism on the one hand, or an avowed infidelity on the other, will, like Gog and Magog of old, endeavor to lay waste the Israel of God, to destroy the Scriptures as the Word of God, and to devastate Christianity so as to deprive it of everything spiritual but the name.

There was a time when the belief in the Ptolemaic system of astronomy was almost universal; but this system did not satisfy the more rationally-developed minds of Copernicus, Galileo and Newton. These men maintained that the former astronomical systems were founded on *appearances* and *fallacies*, and not on *genuine truths*. All men of science now believe they were right, and their opponents wrong. There are, also, appearances of truth in the Scriptures as there are in the works of God; and the Lord says, "Judge not *according to appearance*, but judge righteous judgment;" warning us not to judge according to the first impressions on our senses, or according to our merely sensuous perceptions of revealed things, but according to a spiritual and rational discernment of their nature, and thus to come to a just or "righteous judgment," in which alone the human mind can find its rest and its peace.

Now, permit me to state my sincere belief, from a long experience as to both sides of the question which now engages our attention, and also the belief of an increasing number in all parts of the world, that what Copernicus, Galileo and Newton have done, in respect to *astronomy*, by raising it out of appearances and fallacies into the sphere of *genuine truths*, Swedenborg, through God's Mercy and Providence, has done in respect to *Theology*. He has solved the great problems of religious belief on the basis of Scripture and of reason; and, when calmly and rationally investigated, his solution will be found to satisfy the awakened spirit of rational inquiry which at present

so much actuates all thinking and independent minds.

You admit, Mr. Editor, that God has, at sundry times, employed extraordinary instruments to effect great purposes and changes as to his Church. Thus Luther, Wesley, and others were men raised up by God's providence to meet the wants of the age in which they lived and labored. Those were no ordinary men; they were, through God's power, equal to the emergencies of their times, and posterity still feels the effects of their influence. Now, we believe that Swedenborg was, even in a fuller sense, an extraordinary instrument of God's Providence, raised up and endowed with the necessary illumination to teach us how to understand more clearly the truths of Scripture, and the great problems of human existence. All that is required, as we think, to see this, is a calm consideration of what he has written, compared with Scripture and with the rational deductions of that common-sense principle which is in every sound-thinking mind.

Most fully do I agree with my opponent in the belief that the works of God corroborate and illustrate the Word of God--that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work," etc. But the works of God in nature do not reveal and communicate to us religious and spiritual ideas, all which must come from the revealed Word. It is, however, most true that God's works illustrate and confirm revealed Truth when properly discerned. It will thus, I doubt not, be admitted that a true Theology must be in harmony with a true Science,

and that "as the eyes of a maiden are directed to the hand of her mistress," so will the eyes of a true Science which treats of God's works, be directed in humble obedience to a true Theology which treats of God's Word. But where will you find, at the present day, this agreement? Is not Science almost by common consent separated from Theology, which is forbidden to open her mouth in any of our scientific institutions, lest discord and bitter controversy should ensue? There is a deep conviction in the public mind that the prevailing Theology, although it is called orthodox, is not in agreement with Science; and this is the reason why Theology is banished, although it is the chief of Sciences, from our scientific and literary institutions. Were they in perfect harmony, this certainly would not be the case. But Swedenborg, by rendering Theology at the same time Scriptural and rational, has perfectly harmonized Science and Theology, and made them both concur "in declaring the glory of God."

As to terms, such as the "Holy Spirit," I wish to use them in the sense in which Scripture employs them, for this is the only legitimate sense. The absolute literal sense is, as you are aware, the *holy breath* or *wind*, and this stands, like the terms "flesh and blood," as symbols of the living principles from the Lord on which, through a "faith which worketh by love," we must subsist, in order to become his true disciples. I will endeavor to be careful not to use any term or expression in an ambiguous, but in the true Scriptural sense.

I now come, in my explanation or rejoinder, to

the main point of my opponent's objections. "I believe," says my opponent, "in the essential unity of God, for 'there is one God;' but I am not prepared to admit that the *Humanity of Christ* forms any part of Divinity." Now, we may safely assert that THE great difference between the new and the old systems of Theology consists in this—that the new system believes that the *Humanity* of Jesus is Divine, as being that "in which all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily;" but the other believes, as C. B. affirms, "that the Humanity of Christ forms no part of Divinity."

Let us, then, in all candor and Christian love, consider this very important point of difference between the two systems. And first, let me advert to the *Conception* of Jesus. We find it expressly declared that He had no human father (Matt. i. 18, 25; Luke i. 35), but that the essential Divinity itself, or Jehovah, was his Father. A right idea of this is the root of Christianity. Thus we read that "GOD was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," etc. (2 Cor. v. 19.) "GOD was manifest in the flesh," etc. (1 Tim. iii. 16.) "The Word, which was with God and which was GOD, became flesh," etc. (John i. 1, 14.) In these passages it is expressly declared that God was in Christ, or "manifest in the flesh." But by the term God, or *Theos*, is always meant, not a part of God, or an influence from God, but God himself. God cannot be divided. By regeneration God dwells in man by his Spirit; but "in Him who received the Spirit of God *without measure*" (John

iii. 34), that is, infinitely, the whole "fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily." (Col. ii. 9.)

Here, then, is an infinite distinction between Jesus and all others. Having no human father as every mere man born into the world has, He was, as to his SOUL, infinitely to be distinguished from all other men. In himself "being in *the Form* of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Phil. ii. 6); an expression which, your intelligent readers well know, expresses the fullest claim of identity with God.

Now, as every *essence* must have a *form* before it can manifest itself and exert its influence, so a Divine essence or Soul must have a Divine Form or Body, in which it can manifest itself and display its operations. It is accordingly said in the above quotation, that "He being in the form of God," etc. The term *form*, as you well know from the Greek expression, denotes a substantiality, or a form visible to the eye of faith, as is also evident from the same term being employed to signify the "form of a servant," or a substantiality visible to the eye of the body. God is certainly a *Spirit* (John iv.); but of a spirit, permit me to say, we must not conceive as of an unsubstantial somewhat inconceivable to our intellectual perceptions; for man also is a *spirit*, clothed for a time with a material body. But his spirit is the substantial man himself, which lives forever, and of which even now all the life and intelligence which a man has are properly predicated. The spirit of a man is the substantial centre of all his mental life, of his will, of his intellect, and of their opera-

tions. For these things do not properly belong to the poor perishable body, but to the *spirit* which is in the body.

God, therefore, according to the Apostle, has a *Form;* not a metaphysical abstraction which exists only in the imagination, but a Divine Substantial Form, *not material*, but infinitely exalted above the laws of matter, space and time. Now, what is this "Form of God" in which Christ is expressly declared to be, but "his Glorious Body" (Phil. iii. 21) in which "He hath ascended far above all heavens that He may fill all things"? What but a "Glorious Body," or a Divine Humanity, can "ascend far above all heavens," and "dwell in the light which no man can approach unto," and exercise "all power in heaven and on earth"? (Matt. xxviii. 18.) "For He," as the Apostle says, "upholdeth all things by the word of his power, and it is by Him that all things consist."

But my opponent may probably say, We can form no conception of this "Form of God" which you allege is Christ's glorious Body, or Divine Humanity. Permit me, however, to state that the Lord in the Gospels has taught us how to conceive of this "glorious Body." For when He was transfigured, "his face shone as the sun, and his garments were white as the light." This is his glorious Body, or his Divine Humanity, or the "Form of God." And of this, as He has mercifully revealed himself, we *can* form a conception. Jesus in his ordinary appearance before the bodily eyes of his disciples and others, was in the "likeness of sinful flesh," in the "form of a ser-

vant," in which "He humbled himself even to the death of the cross;" but when his disciples, as in the case of the transfiguration, were "*in vision*," that is, in the spirit, they saw Him in his glorious Body. At the period of his crucifixion and resurrection, He put off the "form of a servant," and fully "put on the Form of God" or the Divine Humanity, in which the Father and the Son are one, as the soul and body are one. The Gospels, as we understand them, are full of the evidence of the Divinity of Christ, that is, the Divinity of his Humanity. When He says, "Come unto me," "Learn of me," "I will give you rest," etc., He shows us that in his Divine Humanity He is the Object of worship to whom we must come, and that He alone can give us rest and salvation. In like manner, when He says that "we must come unto Him that we may have life," that we must "eat Him," must "eat his flesh," etc., that we may live, what declarations can be plainer than these to teach us that his Humanity is Divine? In the Apocalypse this fact is even more evident; for as the "Son of Man" in his glory, He declares that He is "the first and the last, the beginning and the end, the Almighty:" all of which terms are predicated of Him in his Humanity. He also says that "He alone can open and no man shut," etc.; He alone addresses the churches, and He alone gives all the felicities of heaven. That He is omnipresent in his Humanity, He declares when He says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Space, however, I am aware, will not allow me to enlarge.

But my opponent says in respect to the Trinity of Persons, "that he is conscious he cannot comprehend the mystery." Permit me to state that a Trinity of Persons is incomprehensible, because it is unscriptural and irrational, but not a Trinity of Essentials in one Person answering to the *soul*, the *body* and the *operation* in man, who is "in the image of God;" for we cannot possibly understand what a man is unless we understand him in this three-fold capacity, or as a *trine;* and, as shown in my former letter, there is a *trine* or three-fold principle in everything that God has made, as in the sun and in every object; and this, because there is a *trine* or Trinity in God from whom all things come. The Lord says that "to his disciples is *given to know the mysteries* of his kingdom," of which the Trinity is, no doubt, the most important. He also requires us "to understand what we read." (Matt. xxiv. 15.)

I perfectly agree with my opponent in the belief that there was a Trinity prior to the incarnation. But not *such* a Trinity as after the incarnation. There was, prior to the incarnation, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but these were in the inmost principles of Deity, not "declared," or, as in the Greek text, "brought forth to view" (John i. 18); that is, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were brought forth to view in the Person of Jesus, who says, "He that seeth me, seeth the Father," and who after his glorification "breathed on his disciples and said, Receive ye the Holy Spirit." (John xx. 22.) The specific difference between the "Spirit of God," called also the "Spirit of Holiness," which operated prior

to the incarnation, and the "Holy Spirit," which proceeded from Jesus after that event, will be explained when we come to treat specifically on that subject.

And all this is perfectly consistent with the unchangeable nature of God. For God did not change his nature by becoming "manifest in the flesh" for the purpose of redemption, any more than a man of war changes his nature by clothing himself with the necessary armor to combat his enemies. He takes to himself a medium for the purpose, but he does not change himself. So God, by clothing Himself with our humanity, took to Himself a *Medium* for the purpose of redemption. This medium He glorified or made Divine, and this is now and forever the "*Mediator* between God and man." "No man cometh to the Father but by me." But in my subsequent letters all these points, especially when we come to treat of the Atonement, will be more fully cleared up. I will only observe that the term in Greek denoting the Holy Spirit is in the neuter gender, except when designated as the Comforter.

When Swedenborg uses the term "*arcanum from heaven*," he means a truth brought forth from the Scriptures, but not hitherto seen and acknowledged. For all the wisdom of angels and all the truths of heaven are from the Word of God, "which is forever established in heaven."

I am, etc.,

A. V.

LETTER III.

THE DIVINE HUMANITY AND REDEMPTION.

SIR:—I have just perused my respected opponent's reply to my second letter. I am glad to see that "He thinks scarcely any intelligent Christian is opposed to inquiry as to the reception of new light from the Word of God." But no new light or truth can come from any other source than from Him who is the Light and the Truth itself. A new *idea* of Jesus Christ, which shall exalt Him more in our faith and love, cannot, I am persuaded, be unwelcome to any intelligent Christian. This new and exalted *idea* is presented in the doctrines of the New Church. As He is acknowledged not only to be the *head*, but the *all in all* of his church, we think that the *view* taken of Him, is the criterion by which to judge of the truth and excellency or otherwise of any system professing to be Christian. In this respect I must impress upon your numerous readers, that the doctrines of the New Church have the most solemn claims upon their attention.

My opponent refers to Gal. i. 6–9, "about another Gospel than that which the Apostle preached." Let me ask my opponent seriously whether He thinks that the doctrines now commonly preached, are not another Gospel than that which the Apostle preached? Did not the Apostle preach, according

to the motto of your liberal and talented paper, that *charity* is the greatest of Christian graces? But what does the Christian world for the most part teach? It teaches justification and salvation by *faith only* as the chief of Christian graces, and leaves charity almost out of sight as a means of salvation. Is not this another Gospel? Did not the Apostle plainly teach that Jesus Christ in his "glorious Body" is the very "form of God," in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells? Is this now taught? —but is not quite another Gospel taught? On this point surely every thoughtful Christian when reading the Gospel, is led to make a distinction in his thoughts between Jesus as the *Son of Mary*, and Jesus when glorified as the "*Son of God.*" This is the distinction upon which we insist in order to arrive at the idea of the Divine Humanity. But more of this in the sequel.

My opponent alludes to the Mormons. Permit me to state that no two classes of persons can be more opposite, than the people of the New Church called "Swedenborgians," and the Mormons. But whence is Mormonism? Is it not an outgrowth of the corrupt state of Christianity both as to doctrine and life? Ought not this appalling fact to make thoughtful minds review the prevailing doctrines, and see whether there is not something radically wrong which permits, or gives rise to, such an outgrowth of corruption?

"How can I think," says my friendly opponent, "that the apostolic churches knew less of the will of God than I do, when they had the privilege of

apostles?" etc. But permit me to remind him that the apostles often reprove the churches for not making greater progress in the spiritual knowledge of Christianity. "I have fed you," says Paul to the Corinthians, "with *milk*, and not with *meat;* for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able, for ye are yet *carnal*," etc. (1 Cor. iii. 2, 3.) It is to be feared that there are very many now in the same predicament, and who do not make that progress which the Apostle would require. The New Church doctrines, if considered, will afford to all this *meat* of which the Apostle speaks, and enable them to make progress in the knowledge and love of divine truths from the Word of God.

Science, it is true, has made great progress since Swedenborg's day; but how can a system of theology of which, from the Trinity downwards, every doctrine is acknowledged to be an impenetrable mystery, be in harmony with science? Our scientific men are now—judging, at least, from appearances—more imbued with the spirit of piety, and more ready to acknowledge God in his works than formerly; but this does not prove that science and the prevailing theology are in spiritual and rational harmony. But the theology of the New Church *is* in harmony with true science.

As to the resurrection, we shall see, when we come to treat of that subject, how fully the doctrine of the Apostle, that there is a "natural body and a spiritual body," and that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," is confirmed by the doctrines of the New Church. The form of a *dove* at the bap-

tism, to which my opponent alludes, as the symbol of the Holy Spirit, plainly shows, as we shall see in subsequent discussions, that the Holy Spirit is not a Person. If each Person is co-equal, as is declared, and has a Divine mind, there must be three Gods; but if the three have a Divine mind among them, either one must be the real God, and the other have dependent derivations, or each has a third part of the Divine mind, which, as God is indivisible, cannot be admitted. From this dilemma every thoughtful mind would wish to be delivered; and the New Church doctrine of three Essentials in one Person, affords the means of deliverance. All my Scripture references in proof of the Divine Humanity of Jesus remain intact. I am glad that my opponent has his Greek New Testament before him, as we shall understand each other better.

In my last letter, with your kind permission, I dwelt much on the *essential* doctrine of the Church of the New Jerusalem—the "Glorious Body," or the Divine Humanity of Jesus. We consider this doctrine to be so essential, so vital to a genuine Christianity, that it cannot possibly exist in its love, truth, holiness and beauty, without it. When the Lord says, "Ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life" (John v. 40), together with many other declarations of a similar import, He plainly, as we think, teaches us that his "Glorious Body," especially as it is now, in its resurrection and ascension glory, "far above all heavens," having "all power in heaven and on earth," is not only the residence "of all the fulness of the Godhead," but the only

fountain of life to all. For what but a Divine personal form, called by the Apostle the "form of God," can be the residence of the fulness of the Deity? Of what other form can it be said that "we must eat the flesh," which is the essential divine Love, and "drink the blood," which is the essential divine Truth, in order that we may have life within us? But flesh and blood are the very elements of humanity; consequently the Humanity of Jesus is essentially Divine.

We by no means understand Swedenborg to teach that the Lord had "three distinct humanities;" but that He had a humanity from the Virgin mother, which was "in the form of a servant" and "like unto his brethren" (Heb. ii. 17), is not doubted; and that by glorification, the final process of which was effected by his death on the cross and his subsequent resurrection, He completely put off the "form of a servant," and put on the "form of God," as represented, in so far as He was then glorified, by "his face shining as the sun," etc., on the Mount of Transfiguration, is equally a divine truth of revelation, which we think is the essential basis of a living Christianity, both in the individual mind and in the aggregate of minds, on which basis the church both in heaven and on earth must be established. Thus, as to his Glorious Body or Divine Humanity, He says, "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." (John xii. 32.) Thus He is the Divine Centre of attraction, and blessed are all they who, through a right faith in Him, and through

a fervent love of Him, by keeping his commandments, come into this sphere of attraction.

We know that the Lord's glorification is the perfect pattern of our regeneration, or that our regeneration is the image of his glorification; hence He so often says that we are to "follow Him." Now, "we have to put off the *old man*, and by being renewed in the spirit of our mind, to put on the *new man*," etc. (Eph. iv. 22, 23.) From this it also appears that a man is the subject of *two humanities*—the *old* which by regeneration he puts off, and the *new* which by the same renewing process he puts on. If an individual man during regeneration is the subject of two humanities, it need not surprise us that the Lord himself was similarly circumstanced; with this great difference, however, that He put on, from the Divinity within Him, a Divine Humanity, whereas we put on, *from Him*, a regenerated or spiritual humanity, called also by the Apostle "the spiritual mind in which is life and peace." (Rom. viii. 6.) It is in this way that "we come unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. iv. 13), which is our happy destiny.

This doctrine of a Divine Humanity presents to us the one personal God, permit me to say, in the most attractive form to our perceptions, to our faith and love. It is almost universally admitted that God, or the essential Divine Nature, cannot be known and approached out of Christ. Thus, an invisible God inaccessible to our thought and love, is not the God of Christianity, but the God of the Deist and the Pantheist. But Christianity brings us acquainted

with a God "who is not far off," but close at hand, knocking at the door of our hearts to come in to us and to bless us. (Rev. iii. 20.) And He who thus stands at the door of every heart is the "Son of Man in his glory," or Jesus in his Divine Humanity. He is consequently omnipresent in his Humanity, or He could not stand at the entrance to every heart; and as He declares himself to be present "wherever two or three are gathered together in his name" (Matt. xviii. 20), hence we conclude that omnipresence is an essential attribute of Him in his Humanity or "Glorious Body."

But pardon me, if in all charity I say that the Athanasian dogma of Three Persons confuses and darkens this truth, and renders the Deity, as is confessed, an impenetrable mystery to our most devout and spiritual perceptions, which in the nature of things will have an *object* which they can perceive and love; whereas, the doctrine of the Trinity as being three divine Essentials in one Person, answering to the soul, body and operation in one man the "image of God," clears up this mystery to our faith, and brings the one personal God with all the fulness of Deity close to our hearts. The essential Divinity which is the Father, the Divine Humanity which is the Son, and the Divine Proceeding which is the Holy Spirit, are, "as the fulness of the Godhead," concentrated in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord said that what He had stated concerning the Father and the Son, He spake in *proverbs*. (John xvi. 25.) Now, we never take a proverb in its merely literal

sense, but we look to an ulterior meaning which the proverb implies.

A child, I am aware, when reading of the Father and the Son, will naturally and necessarily form a merely literal and material idea, as of two Persons. But the idea of our childhood is not to be the idea of our rational manhood. "When I was a child," says the Apostle, "I thought as a child, and I understood as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." What, then, does the proverb imply? The Lord teaches us that the "Father is in Him," that "He is one with the Father," and that "whoso seeth Him seeth the Father." This relation of the Father and the Son is that of the soul and the body. Hereby the substance of the one and of the other is not confounded, but considered as *distinctly* one. Now, the Apostle teaches us the same fact in other terms, when he says "that the Son is the brightness of his [the Father's] glory, and the express image of his person." (Heb. i. 3.) The Son therefore is, in relation to the Father, as *brightness* to *glory*.

I need not inform you and your intelligent readers that the term rendered *person* in the above passage is, in Greek, *hupostasis*, which means *substance* and not person. The correct idea, then, which the Greek conveys, and which, I believe, is not disputed by the learned, is that the Son is the express image of the Father's *substance*. Here, then, the Apostle teaches us the same fact as he taught the Philippians, that Jesus is the "form of God," as stated in my last letter. For we learn not only that the Father is a

substance, but that the Son is the express form or image of that substance. This, of course, is predicated of the Son in his state of glorification, not of the Son in his state of humiliation, in the "form of a servant." We have already said that to draw arguments against the Divinity of Christ in his humanity, from what He said of himself in his humiliation and suffering, as the Socinians do, is most erroneous. But, as we now all look to Jesus as our glorified Saviour, we ought to derive our arguments from what He says of himself, in his state of glorification, as being one with the Father.

But there is a beautiful coherence and harmony between doctrines which proceed from a fundamental principle which is *true*, as said in my first letter; and we shall see in the discussion of other doctrines how this fundamental truth, that Jehovah assumed the Humanity in the person of Jesus and glorified it or made it divine, so as to dwell in it as his own Divine Personal Form, making it not only the divine *Medium* of access to himself, but also the only true *Object* of worship—how this fundamental truth can be confirmed and illustrated. It will be clearly shown that Jesus in his Glorious Body is, according to the prediction, "the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace." It will also be seen that Jerusalem is "builded as a city that is compact together."

Redemption is a subject which deeply interests the devout and thoughtful mind. The first question to be solved in arriving at a correct idea on this subject is this—"*Who is the Redeemer?*" Unless this, as my respected opponent will admit, is correctly an-

swered, the whole subject will remain in obscurity, and the mind having no clear ideas, will not be able to think on this important point of Christian theology with any degree of satisfaction. The common opinion is, that the supposed Second Person in the Trinity became the Redeemer. But that this opinion, although considered as orthodox, is not founded on Scripture, we now proceed to demonstrate. It is uniformly asserted in the Word of God, that *Jehovah himself* is the Redeemer and Saviour of his people. The reader will have the kindness to observe that wherever the term LORD, printed in capitals, occurs in the Scripture, it is in almost all cases *Jehovah* in the Hebrew,—a fact which must not be overlooked, because, without knowing it, the reader of the Scriptures cannot so well identify the great Jehovah with the Redeemer of mankind. Let the following passages, not to mention numerous others which might be adduced, prove the truth of this declaration :—

"I am *Jehovah*, and beside me there is no Saviour." (Isaiah xliii. 11.) "All flesh shall know that I, *Jehovah*, am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer." (xlix. 26; lx. 10.) "Their Redeemer is strong, Jehovah of Hosts is his name." (Jer. i. 34.) Such passages as these are extremely numerous; we will, however, only adduce one more, which is conclusive :—"I am Jehovah, thy God; thou shalt know no God but me, for there is *no Saviour* besides me." (Hos. xiii. 4.)

From these and many other passages, it must be evident that Jehovah God, who is *one*, descended as the Word, or *Logos*, or as the Divine Truth itself, and was "*made* flesh" (John i. 1, 14), for the purpose of redemption. Most true then it was that "God

was in Christ," etc., that "God was manifest in the flesh." John the Baptist declared, when he was demanded of the Pharisees who he was, that he was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah, make his paths straight; . . . and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." (Luke iii. 4, 6, compared with Isaiah xl. 3, 5.) Thus, to see that Jehovah is the Redeemer and Saviour, and that He appeared in the person of Jesus, is the fundamental truth of redemption and salvation. To suppose, as the common theology does, that the Redeemer was some other person than Jehovah himself, is quite opposed to the testimony of Scripture, and specifically to the divine declaration, that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

That redemption was a necessary work, is admitted on all hands. For both Scripture and history give us fearful accounts of the fallen and corrupt state of the human race at the time "God was manifest in the flesh." (See especially Rom. i. 29–32.) Our own experience also, if we know our own hearts, testifies most amply to its necessity.

But redemption means *deliverance* from the powers of darkness and of hell. Thus, Zacharias, filled with the Holy Ghost, said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed his people, that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us." (Luke i. 68, 71.) Here it is expressly declared that it was "JEHOVAH the God of Israel who redeemed his people," etc. How erroneous, then, it is to imagine that it was a second Person, and not Jehovah the Father Himself, who came to redeem us!

The deliverance of Israel from Egypt is a perfect type of redemption. At the time the Lord came into the world, "unclean spirits and devils," as we read in the Gospels, were taking possession of the human race. These were, and are still, the enemies from which we are delivered by our Saviour God. If redemption had not been accomplished, "no flesh could have been saved." But the medium by which this was accomplished was the flesh or humanity which Jehovah assumed for the purpose. The life of this humanity He "laid down as a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28); He "poured out his soul unto death," etc., in order that we might be delivered and saved. He first "abolished the enmity in his own flesh" (Eph. ii. 15, 16), or humanity which He assumed, and so prepared the way and the means of abolishing the enmity between God and man in all others, if we look to Him and "obey Him as the author of our salvation." (Heb. v. 9.)

But I am again reminded that my space forbids me to enlarge. In other letters, therefore, I shall pursue this subject by explaining the New Church doctrine of the Atonement, which will be found perfectly consistent with the idea of One Person in the Godhead, "who in his love and pity hath redeemed us." In discussing this subject the Holy Spirit will come more directly under consideration, when I hope to answer my opponent's objections against the idea of its not being a Person, but an operative Power from the Lord Jesus Christ, who expressly declared that He "himself would (after his glorification) send the Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth," etc. (John xv. 26.)

A. V.

LETTER IV.

A TRUE IDEA OF GOD—ITS IMPORTANCE.

SIR:—I have perused the last letter of my friendly opponent with great interest and attention. He is not willing to admit that we of the Church of the New Jerusalem think more highly of Jesus Christ than himself, and those who think with him. He objects to *new ideas* of Jesus, but admits "that we want fuller, brighter, clearer, and more enrapturing views" concerning Him. This is all that is intended by new ideas. These "fuller, brighter, clearer and more enrapturing views," I am persuaded are to be found, as opened from the Scriptures, in the doctrines of the New Church; and on this account chiefly we engage in this discussion.

My friend alludes "to a poor dying woman, in confirmation of his creed." I will only say that a death-bed confession, like a death-bed repentance, is rarely genuine. It is the confession which we make in our daily life, by so letting "our light shine before men, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven,"—it is this confession which chiefly proves our belief in the Lord. Many Roman Catholics, Mussulmen, and Hindoos, have endured torture in confessing their religious dogmas; but were they true for all that?

There is, however, a great difference between us,

as there must be between those who think only of *one Person* "in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily," and those who think of *three Persons*, of whom each, as the creed says, "is by himself God and Lord." The true *idea* of God, as the Fountain of life and the Object of worship, is, as said in our first letter, the basis of Christianity, and the starting-point of all true doctrine. One great object in this discussion is, to induce your numerous readers to reflect upon this fundamental idea, and to inquire into its truth and its saving efficacy. To think too highly, too divinely, of the Lord Jesus Christ, "the Author and Finisher of our faith," is impossible. For "without Him was not anything made that was made;" by Him were all things created that are in heaven and on earth, etc. "All things were created by Him and for Him, and by Him all things consist." (Col. i. 16, 17.) I am aware that all this is not denied by my friendly opponent; but the specific difference between us is, that my opponent thinks that all this is said of the Lord as to his *Divinity* and not as to his *Humanity* at the same time, thus separating his divinity from his *Humanity*. But we believe that this is said of his Humanity also, which, containing within it "all the fulness of the Godhead," is necessarily Divine. Thus we do not believe that the Divinity of the Father is one thing, and the Divinity of the Son another thing; for this would certainly be two Divinities, or two Gods. The Gospel, it is certain, does not teach this; but the Gospel teaches us "that the Father is in the Son," or "that God was in Christ;" "God mani-

fest in the flesh," etc.; that Jesus was "Emmanuel —God with us;" or "that the Word which became flesh, was God." Thus the Divinity of the Father was the only Divinity of the Son—"I and the Father are One." Consequently there is one Divinity only, and not two; and this one Divinity can only be known, thought of, approached, and worshipped in the Lord, for "no man hath at any time seen the Father's shape, or heard his voice" (John v. 37), which evidently implies that no man can form any idea of the Father out of the Son, nor have any access to Him but by the Son, as the Lord plainly declares—"No man cometh to the Father but by me."

Hence we see the error of those who worship the Father as a being out of the Son, and as a distinct Person from the Son. The relation, therefore, between the Father and the Son is not that of two infinite and unanimous Persons, for this again would be equal to two Gods; but the relation is that of soul and body, or, as the Apostle defines it, "of image or form to substance," of "brightness to glory;" in which figure *glory* is considered as the substance, and *brightness* the form. (Heb. i. 2, 3.)

It is, as my opponent well knows, irrational to suppose that there can be a substance without a form: the one implies the other. But as my friend truly says, "this substance, or *hypostasis*, which the Father is declared to be (Heb. i.), is *not material*." Truly—and this shows us that there are other substances besides those which are material or obvious to our senses. Thus the spiritual world consists of spiritual substances, as the natural world of material

substances. The body of angels and spirits is not material but spiritual. "There are," says the Apostle, "*celestial* bodies and *terrestrial* bodies; and the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another." (1 Cor. xv. 40.) And as the Apostle, as well as the Athanasian Creed received as orthodox, declares that the Father is a *substance*, this must consequently be a *Divine* substance which is infinitely exalted above the laws of material substance; consequently by no means subject to gravitation, locomotion, space or time, but is everywhere present and operative for the preservation of the universe and for the salvation of men.

I am aware that the difficulty which my respected opponent feels in thinking of the Divine Humanity is, that he thinks of it from matter and space. But by elevating his thought above the low conditions which belong solely to our material being, he will have no more difficulty in thinking of the omnipresence of the Lord in his Divine Humanity, than he will in thinking of God as a Divine substance or *hypostasis* being everywhere present. Every Christian, especially in prayer and worship, thinks of God as omnipresent, and that He hears his petitions. But the Father, as already said, can have no access to us but in the Son, no more than we can come to the Father but by the Son (Matt. xi. 27); consequently the Father cannot hear our prayers or accept our worship but through the Son, any more than a man's mind can hear and understand the thought and conversation of another but by means of his body; or than a man can have access to the

mind of his friend but through the medium of his body. Viewing the subject, therefore, which way you will—admitting, as the Gospel teaches, that the "Father is in the Son." Jesus in his risen or glorious Body is Divine, and this especially when we consider that in this "glorious Body" He is able, as the Apostle says, "to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. iii. 21.) For what but a Divine Body or Humanity can subdue all things unto himself? Can this be said of any mere body or humanity such as a man has, or of any merely spiritual body, such as an angel has? Do we not see that such a thing as "subduing all things unto himself," can only be predicated of a Divine Body? Again, then, we conclude that the Humanity of Jesus is Divine.

It is the merest sensuous fallacy to suppose that that only is *substance* which is *material*, obvious to our bodily senses. *Spirit* is, in a truer sense, more *substantial* than *matter*, as the spirit or mind which is in a man is more *substantial* than the body of matter which it actuates. For in true thinking it must be admitted that that which *actuates* is more substantial than that which *is actuated*. A cause which gives birth to an effect is more substantial than the effect itself. Admit the substantiality of the *latter*, and *à fortiori* you must admit the substantiality of the *former*. Is it in agreement with sound intelligence to deny to the cause substantiality, because we cannot see it and handle it, and yet ascribe substantiality to the *effect* which we can see and handle? It is admitted in sound logic that that which is *prior* is more substantial than that which is *posterior;* and

as God is not only the *Prior*, but the *Primus*, He is the most *Substantial* of all things, from whom indeed all things derive their substantiality. Thus all things in the heavens, of which things on the earth are only types and shadows, are, as the causes under God of earthly things, more substantial in their nature, as being nearer God than earthly things can possibly be. For is not that which a type signifies or represents, more substantial than the type which signifies it, or which merely shadows it forth in a lower sphere of existence?

But to adhere closely to my first postulate, that all our reasonings and deductions in this discussion "shall be confirmed by Scripture," I will merely ask my opponent whether the "heavenly things" according to the pattern of which the tabernacle and all things belonging to it were made, which Moses saw by Divine direction in spirit on the mount (Exod. xxv. 9; Heb. viii. 5), were not more substantial than the "shadows" or types which he constructed or formed (Exodus xxv.) of the heavenly things themselves? But these "heavenly things" were purely spiritual, and by no means natural. Now this plainly shows us that there are spiritual substances as well as material, which, as said above, are not subject to the laws of matter, of gravitation, weight, measure, either by miles, yards, feet or inches, or of space and time; but that these spiritual substances are subject to their own laws peculiar to their own nature. It is true that in describing the dimensions of the tabernacle and of the curtains, earthly measurements are employed; but these measurements are

only applicable to the types upon earth, and not to the "heavenly things" there typified or represented. Things purely true and good, and their states and qualities, are thereby signified, which, as the Apostle says, are "spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14), thus not with a gross material idea, which is incapable of comprehending the true nature of heavenly things, but with an immaterial or spiritual idea, which, as my opponent admits, is the true idea with which spiritual things should be apprehended.

But as every substance must have a *form* before it can exist as a substance, so spiritual substances must have spiritual forms. These forms, like their substances, are very different from natural forms in everything but appearance, and subject to different laws. Thus the spirit of a man which lives after death is a spiritual substance, and its form is also spiritual, called by the Apostle "a spiritual body." Of this body we cannot predicate material properties, such as bulk, weight, height, etc.; although the spiritual body *appears* to have these properties, yet we cannot in a material sense predicate them of its substance and form; nevertheless they have, according to correspondence, a signification which implies the qualities of the spiritual substances thus designated by properties taken from natural objects. Thus in the Scriptures we read of a mind *high*, *lowly*, *exalted*, *abased*, *downcast*, *etc.*, but we do not take these expressions in their *material* sense, but in a sense as applicable to mind, different from that which is applicable to matter. This we do without special instruction, by a kind of instinctive perception of

the fact. When also we say that a man has a *sour* or *crabbed* mind, we do not in a material sense mean that his mind is *sour* or like a *crab*, but we mean that the quality of a crab, which is sourness, corresponds to his mental state, and designates it. Now the Scriptures are full of these expressions, taken from natural objects, to denote by analogy or correspondence spiritual qualities, or the qualities of spiritual substance. The spiritual things seen by the prophets, as recorded in Scripture, were to them as substantial and as real as natural objects seen by men.

And this brings us to the consideration of *ideas*. The idea which we form of a thing is either natural or spiritual. If it is natural it will be characterized by the properties and laws of matter, that is, it will have to do with size, bulk, weight, number, etc., and also with space and time. But if it is spiritual it will not have to do with these properties of matter. Thus, when we think of holiness, innocence, wisdom, intelligence, faith, love, etc., we do not think of these things as connected with matter, and its bulk, weight, etc., nor as associated with any particular man, although it is most true that they cannot exist but in a subject who is an angel or a man, and supremely and infinitely in God as the subject from whom they come.

Permit me here to add, in confirmation of the doctrine of the Divine Humanity, that all these properties are ascribed to Jesus Christ in his Humanity. Thus in his Humanity He is said to be "the Author and Finisher of our faith" (Heb. xii. 2). In Him,

understood as to his "Glorious Body" or Divine Humanity, "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 3). Again, He is said to be the only Holy One—"For thou only art holy" (Rev. xv. 4). All these things are said of Jesus in his Humanity. But how can all these infinite perfections be said of Him in his Humanity, unless it is Divine? For these things can only be predicated of Him who is infinite and Divine. But if we can have an idea of the form of holiness, love, etc., as abstracted from matter and its laws, so we can have an idea of the "form of God" as totally abstracted from materiality and its limitations. Thus we can think of God in Christ, or of God in a Divine Humanity, without the material ideas of size, bulk, extension, weight, etc., and thus think of Him as "the Author and Finisher of our faith," and as being omnipresent, and all-powerful in heaven and on earth. Hence it is, as all systems of logic admit, that our higher or immaterial ideas are not necessarily connected with matter; and for this reason, indeed, they are called *immaterial*. Even the idea which an architect has of a building he is about to erect, is considered by him in the first place as abstracted from the laws and dimensions of materiality. His idea begins to partake of these material properties when he begins to plan it out on paper, and still more when he begins to construct the building itself. But in the first instance it exists irrespective of these material conditions. Nevertheless it is not a mere abstraction, but a substantial power, which, as it puts itself forth,

gives rise to the building, which *without the idea* could never exist.

Our ideas, then, as the essential elements of all our thinking and doing, are wonderful things. Is it possible that God could give us the power to form an idea of everything within the range of our thought, and not of Himself? By no means. He also gives us the power, by virtue of our rational mind, to form an idea of Himself, not as a metaphysical abstraction, which is no God, but of Himself as presented to our minds in the Person or Divine Humanity of Christ.

But my friend will excuse me if I dwell, for the last time in this discussion, yet a moment or two, on this vital point. My opponent says,—

"How can the passages in proof of the Divine Humanity, adduced in former letters, teach identity when they perpetually distinguish?"

I thought it was plainly shown that the said passages teach clearly a distinction, and not an identity in the Trinity, and by no means confound the essentials denoted by Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which constitute it,—the distinction being that of soul, body, and operation in one man created "in the image of God." Here is no confusion, but a clear distinction, yet a perfect one—Trinity in Unity.

My respected opponent says, with a note of exclamation,—

"Yet this doctrine of the Humanity which makes man God and God man, is essential to the well-being of Christianity!"

This, if I mistake not, is not only doubted, but repudiated. Let me, then, employ his own weapons of orthodoxy in proof of this. The Athanasian Creed (the bulwark of orthodoxy) says—

"For as the rational soul and body are one man, so God and man is one Christ. One, not by the conversion of the divine essence into the human, but by the assumption of the human essence into the divine."

Here even orthodoxy teaches the truth for which we contend, namely, that in Christ God is man and man is God, "not by the conversion of the divine essence into the human, or of the divinity into body, but by the assumption of the human essence into the divine, or into God." If this creed taught only one Person in whom is the Trinity, instead of three Persons, it would come pretty near to the truth. But the idea of three Persons, "each by himself being God and Lord," destroys the truth of the above extract, that "in Christ God is man and man is God," and thus, although belonging to orthodoxy, my opponent looks upon it with astonishment as being a strange doctrine. For the above extract teaches the doctrine of the Divine Humanity, or that in Christ God is Man; for how can God in Christ be Man, except the Manhood or Humanity of Christ is Divine? Impossible.

In thus deriving a proof from orthodoxy itself, we are not departing from our first postulate, which requires that everything be drawn from the Word of God, and confirmed thereby. For that this truth is abundantly declared in the Scriptures, is evident

when we consider that "all things which the Father hath are his;" for how can the infinite things of the Father belong to a Person who is not infinite and Divine? consequently the Humanity to which all these infinite things belong is Divine. Again: "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself." Now my opponent will admit that "to have life in himself" is the exclusive prerogative of Deity. Since there is but one fountain of Life, which is God, all other beings receive life from Him. Jesus, moreover, declares himself to be *the Life*. But how can Jesus "have life in himself," and dispense it to all others, except his Humanity be Divine?

My opponent objects to the interpretation of the passage—"He being in the form of God," etc. (Phil. ii. 6), as conveying the idea that Christ in himself, "as coming forth from the Father," was in the "form of God;" intimating that He was in this *form* prior to the incarnation, and not during his incarnation, or when in the world; and that consequently the interpretation which was given in my former letter, and which, as we shall soon see, is evidently involved in the text, "falls headlong like Dagon before the ark to the ground." That prior to the incarnation He was in "the form of God," there can be no doubt; for He says, "Before Abraham was I am," thus declaring his pre-existence. But that this "form of God" in highest or inmost principles, clothed itself by incarnation with the "form of a servant, in which He humbled himself," etc., is clear from a proper view of the text. For

my opponent, on referring to the Greek, will admit that *huparchôn*, "being," as correctly given in the common version, is the present participle, and not the past, *having been*. In confirmation, see Luke xi. 13—"If ye, being (*huparchontes*) evil," etc. I am aware that the gloss of Suidas would interpret *huparchôn* by *proeinai*, "to exist before;" but this he was not warranted in doing, and his interpretation is rejected by most of the learned.* This passage clearly teaches, as the doctrines of the New Church affirm, that the Lord had a Humanity (a form) from the Father, and also a humanity (the form of a servant) from the mother; and that his glorification consisted in putting off the latter and putting on the former, which He did by degrees during his life in the world, and finally by his death and resurrection in all fulness, even to the very "flesh and bones." (Luke xxiv. 39.) For that the Lord glorified his humanity by degrees, is plainly declared in John xii. 28. This divine Form, or Humanity, as far as it was glorified, He was pleased to show to his disciples at the transfiguration, when "His face shone as the sun, and his garments were white as the light."

It must, however, be distinctly understood that although Jesus was not fully glorified, or did not fully put on the Divine Humanity from the Father until the crucifixion and resurrection, yet when "He manifested himself unto Israel and began to preach, being about thirty years of age" (Luke iii. 23), every-

* See Trollope's "Analecta Theologica," vol. ii., p. 496.

thing which He said and did as recorded in the Gospels, was from Him in his Divine Person or Humanity, although still clothed until the crucifixion externally, before the eyes of men, with the "form of a servant," or with the humanity from the mother, in which He was "in all things like unto his brethren" (Heb. ii. 17).

This remark meets my opponent's statement, in objecting to a visible God, when he says,—

"Such passages as John xiv. 7–9, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,' etc., cannot weaken my position, because Jesus was not yet glorified, and therefore not yet God in that which was visible."

But this statement implies that my friend has a perception, which is very true, that God, after Jesus was glorified, was visible in Him, or that Jesus is the visible God in whom is the invisible. And this is what we mean when we say that Christianity, in opposition to the Deist and the Pantheist, has a Personal and a visible God, that is, a God visible to our perception, to our faith and love, a God whom the mind can approach and love, which is impossible with an impersonal abstraction called God invisible, or imperceptible to our thought. One great object, indeed, which God had in being "manifest in the flesh," and in glorifying or making divine the humanity He assumed, was to render Himself visible and fully accessible to the minds of his intelligent creatures.

But my opponent appears to hold in aversion the idea of a visible God, and he says,—

"Paul and Peter and John had seen Jesus after his resurrection, yet they say that they had not seen and could not see God."

But my friend forgets that Thomas, when he saw Jesus after his resurrection, addressed Him by saying, "My Lord and my God" (John xx. 28). Here Thomas addresses Jesus in his glorified Humanity, and calls Him his God. Surely nothing can be more conclusive as to the Divinity of his Humanity. John also, after the resurrection, calls Jesus "the true God and eternal life" (1 Eph. v. 20); and in the Apocalypse he calls Him the "First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, the Almighty." All this is said of Him as of the "Son of Man in his glory," that is, of Him in his Divine Humanity. Paul also calls Him, after his resurrection, and after he had seen Jesus as recorded in the Acts, "God over all, blessed forever" (Rom. ix. 5). Surely my opponent must himself "have visited the frigid zone of Socinianism," to find arguments against the Divinity of Jesus in his Humanity.

It is asked, "Where is it taught in the churches of Christ that God is inaccessible to our faith and love?" Let me direct attention to the first of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England; and from what is there said, it will be seen that it is impossible to form any idea or conception of God; and the mind cannot in the nature of things approach to that of which it can form no idea.

We have not misrepresented the documents of orthodoxy, but if my opponent's ideas are not con-

sonant with orthodoxy, let him renounce it. He can find a much better exposition of God's Word and the doctrines of Christianity in the New-Church Theology than in the Thirty-nine Articles or the Westminster Catechism. For the mind *can* form an idea of the one personal God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Trinity as centred in Him, and thus become conjoined to Him by faith and love.

I had intended to broach quite a new subject for discussion, but I find that my space forbids. In my next, therefore, I will enter upon some other topics which are of great importance to a correct idea of Christianity. In the meantime, thanking you, Mr. Editor, for your Christian kindness and courtesy,

I am yours, etc.,

A. V.

LETTER V.

CHURCH COUNCILS; DIVINITY AND HUMANITY; A TRUE PSYCHOLOGY NEEDED.

SIR:—In your editorial remarks of the 15th of last month, I am glad to find you approve of the spirit in which this discussion is conducted. Indeed, why should it be otherwise than truly Christian? Why should the truth be spoken from any other principle than that of love? The essential life and spirit of the Church of the New Jerusalem is, "the love of the Lord above all things, and of our neighbor as ourselves." And this is the truly Christian life and spirit "upon which all the law and the prophets hang," that is, which they universally teach. I am also happy to see that much interest has been manifested in this discussion, and that there has, in consequence, been a great demand for your excellent paper.*

* In the number of the *Christian Weekly News* for April 15th the Editor, in one of his leading articles, entitled "*The Controversy on Swedenborgianism*," says,—"The discussion in these pages between 'A. V.' and 'C. B.' is attracting, as we anticipated, much attention. Hitherto the combatants have maintained a noble spirit, and conformed strictly to the rules laid down for their guidance. Whilst we intentionally refrain, at this stage of the business, from saying anything either for or against the views propounded by the respective writers, we cannot but point to the spirit of the discussion as a model for all

My opponent, in his last letter, goes to the early Church Councils to find the doctrines which I advocate in these letters as those of the Church of the New Jerusalem, which, as many believe, are worthy of all consideration, and as I think, of all acceptation, too. He is, however, not successful in finding the views we advocate, in the decisions of any of these Councils. This I could have told my friend, and have saved him the trouble of much learned research. But he will find them where the true doctrines of Christianity can only be found; that is, in the Word of God, and especially in the Evangelists and the Apostles.

We of the New Church acknowledge only one Church Council, which consists of the prophets and the apostles, with the Lord as their Divine Head; and we acknowledge only one rule of faith, which is the Divine Word itself. Ancient and modern Church Councils, which have engendered and con-

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future theological disputants. There is no rancor; no insinuation of Jesuitry; no offensive personalities which have so often disfigured and disgraced polemical writings. Each believes in the honesty and sincerity of the other, and both bow to the Word of God as the accepted umpire in all such investigations. So far, well. We have nothing to say to either as yet, but to repeat our law of *Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.* The breach of this law will instantly exclude from our pages. Let them show cause, let them 'give a reason of the hope that is in them,' with all the skill and energy of which they are capable; but let them never forget that loyalty to the Lord and love to his truth may characterize both, notwithstanding the manifest difference in interpretation which they exhibit."

firmed the dogmas of transubstantiation, purgatory, the worship of saints and relics, the vicarship of the Pope, the withholding of the Scriptures from the people; the dogmas of predestination and unconditional election as at the Protestant Synod of Dort; and which have sanctioned the cruelties of the Inquisition—all such councils are considered by us as so many abominations in the history of Christianity, which have mightily contributed to its consummation and its ruin. Sorry, indeed, should I be, if my learned opponent had found any of the New-Church doctrines in the decisions of any of these Church Councils. For the almost universal tendency of these Councils has been, to take away from the Lord and his Word the authority which He, and He only, ought to have in his Church, and to place it upon the decisions and traditions of men.

I am perfectly aware that the Nicene Council in 325, established the doctrine of Three Persons in the Trinity, which is not in harmony with the New-Church doctrine of one Divine Person, in whom the Trinity, or "the fulness of the Godhead, dwells." But this by no means proves that the doctrine of one Divine Person in the Godhead is not the Scriptural and true doctrine. The Council of Trent established the dogma of transubstantiation, and the adoration of saints and of relics; but are these dogmas *therefore* true? By no means, as my learned opponent admits.

My friend, however, alludes to the earlier Council of Antioch, and quotes its decision in respect to the Person of Jesus Christ, which is this:—

"That Christ was wholly God and wholly man; wholly God, notwithstanding the body, but *not as to his body*; wholly man, notwithstanding the divinity, but *not as to his divinity*; wholly adorable, notwithstanding the body, but *not as to his body*."

That Christ was "wholly God and wholly man" is a great truth. But how this truth is marred and perverted by the incomprehensible jargon with which it is accompanied in the above extract, your readers will instantly discover. It is common with these councils to take some great truth, and pervert it by their decisions and traditions. Thus a great truth underlies the doctrine of transubstantiation: this truth is, the actual presence in the Holy Supper, of the Lord in his divine Humanity, as the "Son of Man in his glory;" but it is perverted by the gross material ideas with which it is accompanied. It is like a piece of gold under a heap of rubbish. *Quere*—Is not this doctrine, with all the gross material notions attending it, better than the total denial of the omnipresence of the Lord in his "glorious Body"?

Now, if "Christ is wholly God," He must be the *one* only God, since there is "but one God;" and if Christ at the same time be "wholly man," his manhood or humanity must be Divine. This is the truth which is taught in the Gospels and the Epistles, as demonstrated by numerous passages in my former letters. If it were not so, how could He "have all power in heaven and on earth"?

At another council held at Alexandria in 362, they defined, says my friendly opponent, the term *hypos-*

tasis as signifying a person, or "individual existence." This council was held about forty years after the final establishment of the Athanasian Creed. Now, this definition of *hypostasis* as meaning a distinct person, or "individual existence," has given rise to the idea of three Gods. This is, in fact, admitted by such men as Bishop South and Bishop Beveridge.* But the idea of three Gods, or what is the same, of three "infinite individual existences," is fatal to all true religion, and leads directly to Polytheism; from which, permit me to say, there is no possibility of escape but in the belief of one Person in the Deity, as is maintained by the Church of the New Jerusalem.

At this same council, my opponent says, they also condemned a notion similar to that maintained by the New Church, that Jesus had a humanity from the Father [by which he was the Son of God], and a humanity from the mother [by which he was the Son of Man]. Thus the creed says, that "if any one teaches there are two Sons, one from the God and Father, and the other from the mother," etc. But I ask your numerous readers, does not the Gospel make frequent mention of the "Son of God," and of the "Son of Man"? and are not both these expressions predicated of Jesus Christ? and have they not a specific and distinct meaning? Surely this Council was no more in the light of the Gospel than was the Council of Trent, when it confirmed the

* See extracts from their works in "Illustrations of the End of the Church," by the Rev. A. Clissold, M.A., pp. 77–84.

adoration of saints, images, relics, etc. Let us, then, my dear friend, away with church councils, and let us go directly to the Lord himself in his Word, for He says unto us all who are really seeking the truth, "Come unto me," etc.

The direct force of the passage in which Thomas, addressing the Lord after his resurrection, says "My Lord and my God," seems to be evaded by the admission that it refers to the "proper Deity of Christ," as though there were two Deities—the Deity of the Father and the Deity of the Son. This conception, I am aware, is interiorly in the mind of those who think of two Persons; but is it not fatal to the idea of one God, and tantamount to the idea of two Gods? But the idea of one God, it is admitted, is the basis of all true doctrine; and when Thomas calls Jesus "his God," he spoke the truth; implying, of course, that He is the only God, since there is but one God.

That there was a great confusion of ideas among the ancient authors whom your correspondent mentions, in respect to the relation of the Divinity and Humanity in the Person of Christ, is abundantly evident. But having studied both sides of the question, permit me to say that Swedenborg, in his "Doctrine of the Lord," has dissipated this confusion and obscurity, and has introduced light and harmony in its stead.

We do not require any one to believe, as your correspondent mistakenly imagines, "that God has ceased to be God, or that Christ has ceased to be man." God did not cease to be God by becoming incarnate, or "manifest in the flesh" in the person

of Christ; nor did Christ cease to be man by becoming glorified or Divine; but He became God-Man, or, as the orthodox creed expresses it, "Not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God." That Christ is a man, as stated in 1 Tim. ii. 5, alluded to by my opponent, is most true; for "He is the one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus." But it must be well understood that He is not *such a man* as Moses or any of the prophets, but a Divine Man, or the Divine Mediator (Heb. viii. 6) between the essential Deity, or the Father, and mankind; as He himself says, "No man cometh to the Father but by me." This is another proof of the Divinity of his Humanity; for what can receive the "whole fulness of the Deity" and transmit it to others, except a Divine Medium or Mediator? No finite humanity, however exalted, is adequate to this; but the Mediator, as containing "the infinite fulness of the Godhead" and transmitting it to others, must itself be infinite and Divine. We are not to conceive of the Mediator as of another and separate Person from the Deity, or as of a distinct "individual existence," but as of the "glorious Body" of the Divine Soul, or of the Godhead within it. A man's body is the medium or mediator between his soul and all others. His body receives the fulness of the life of his soul, and transmits it to others. In like manner, but in an infinitely higher sense, it may be said of Him, of whom man is but a feeble and finite image.

"C. B." is much mistaken when he says that "A. V." admits that

"Christ was a man *without a human soul*, like those of whom Tertullian writes in his Treatise 'De Carne Christi.'"

Now, as this denial of a human soul to Christ when in the world, is often alleged against us, permit me to say that the New-Church doctrines teach, with the Apostle, "that in all things [as to the humanity born of the Virgin] He was like unto his brethren." He had, consequently, like his brethren, a rational human soul or *animus*. For this rational human soul necessarily belongs to humanity; a humanity cannot be a humanity without it. It was *this soul* which He "poured out unto death;" but we beg it to be *distinctly understood* that, being conceived of Jehovah the Divine Father, and not of a human father (Matt. i. 18, 25; Luke i. 35), his essential, or inmost *soul*, that is his ANIMA as distinguished from his *animus* was Jehovah himself, as "God manifest in the flesh."

My learned opponent well knows, from psychology, that a man inherits a nature from his father which may be termed his internal or "*inward* man," and that he inherits also a nature from his mother, which may be called his external or "*outward* man" (see 2 Cor. iv. 16). Now, "in all things" as to his inheritance from the mother, Jesus was, as said by the Apostle, "like unto his brethren;" but in all things as to his inheritance from the Father, He was infinitely to be distinguished from all other men; and finally, when fully glorified at the resurrection, and when "He ascended far above all heavens that He might fill all things," "before whom every knee

in heaven and on earth shall bow" (Phil. ii. 10), He is, as to his *animus* and also as to his *body*, to be infinitely distinguished above all others; that is, his Humanity or "glorious Body" is Divine, and infinitely to be distinguished from the body of an angel in heaven and of a man in the world.

No term in the English language is probably so *indeterminate* as the term *soul*. From the want of a true psychology, or true doctrine of the soul, men have the most indefinite and obscure ideas of this most important subject. To some the term *soul* presents the idea of an abstract thinking principle without any form or organization whatever; to others, of a merely ethereal principle without any definable form; to others, a something vital, a kind of "vital spark" which animates the body so long as it is connected with it. Others, again, think that the soul is a mere predicate of the activity of the cerebral and nervous system, apart from which it has no existence. The Materialists, for the most part, think in this manner. Whereas the truth is, that the *soul* is the very man himself in a perfectly organized human form, consisting of spiritual substances, called by the Apostle a "spiritual body," and seen as such whenever angels and spirits are mentioned in Scripture. The soul, whilst man lives in the world, is clothed with natural substances called a "natural body," and when this body dies, the *soul* rises in its own human form in its own world—the spiritual world, in which it is created to live forever.

Now a true doctrine of the soul teaches us to think

of man as consisting of an *anima*, a *mens*, an *animus*, and finally of a *corpus* or body. The *anima* is the inmost region of man, and it stands for what is most commonly understood by the term *soul*. The term *anima* involves also what Swedenborg understands by the *human internal* (*A. C.* 1999), which properly regarded, is the inmost region of the *anima*. Again, this *anima* is, as the inmost principle in man, universal; that is, it is not only the inmost principle in itself, but is also the inmost principle of the *mens* or rational mind, also of the *animus* or natural mind, and likewise of the body itself. It is from this ground that in some cases whilst thinking from common influx, we employ the term *souls* to signify men themselves, as when we say there are twenty thousand *souls* in that city.

The *mens* is the rational mind in which man's consciousness is. The upper region of the *mens*, called the spiritual and celestial mind, consists of the purest spiritual substances, and is united with the *anima* as its actuating principle, conveying the Lord's life from its first receptacle, the *human internal*, into every region below it.

The lower region of the *mens* consists of the purest natural substances, discretely distinct from the natural substances of which the body consists, and is the seat of man's rational consciousness whilst in the world, and is also in the middle, between the *anima* on the one hand and the *animus* on the other. In the inmost of the *mens*, or of the rational mind, our conscious human principle commences; all above this, called the *human internal*, and involved by Swe-

denborg in the term *anima*, is above our consciousness. In proportion as a man is actuated in his motives, thoughts, and feelings, by the higher or purely spiritual *mens*, he becomes "spiritually minded" and is heavenly; but in proportion as he is actuated by his lower *animus* only, he does not become spiritual and heavenly, but remains sensual or "carnally minded."

The *animus* is the natural mind, and is intermediate between the *mens* and the body. It also consists of purely natural substances separable by a discrete degree from the material substances of the body. When the body dies, this *animus*, which now whilst living in the world is the seat of our external memory and imaginative faculty, and also of our desires and cupidities, becomes in the spiritual world the external form or "spiritual body" of man.

This *animus*, together with the natural *mens* or mind, which, as stated, consists of the purest natural substances, is also the seat of our hereditary evil propensities, which must be born again or regenerated, in order that it may be in harmony with the spiritual celestial *mens* or mind, and thus be saved. In its unregenerate state this part of man's psychological constitution is in the form of hell, with all its tendencies downward. Hence the absolute necessity of regeneration in order to be saved.

The emotions of the *animus* are visible in the countenance of the body, and we can in some measure read the volitions and thoughts of the *animus* in the face as its index. After death the countenance of this *animus* becomes itself the face or index of the

mens, or rational or interior mind, and far more clearly indicates the volitions, emotions and thoughts of its spirit, than the external countenance visible in the world can image forth the volitions and thoughts of its *animus*.

Now the *anima*, as stated, is not only the inmost soul or actuating principle of man, but it is also the most universal—that is, it is the inmost soul of the *mens*, of the *animus*, and of the *body*. Moreover all these regions thus designated, become perfect just in proportion as they are governed by the *anima*, and are assimilated to its purely spiritual and celestial nature; but they become imperfect and depraved in proportion as they are governed by the *animus*, and subjected to its lower nature and promptings. In the one case the *spirit* bears rule, and the man "walks after the spirit;" but in the other the flesh bears rule, and the man "walks after the flesh." (Rom. viii.) In the former case he is prepared for heaven, but in the latter, if he die in that state, he is corrupted and is fitted only for hell.

In man the *anima* or inmost and universal principle is finite, and only a receptacle of life, and by no means *life* itself, but in the Lord the *anima* was Life itself, Infinite, Jehovah, and the Father; and this is the infinite distinction between Him as conceived of Jehovah or of the indivisible Deity, and every other man as conceived of an earthly father. Keeping this distinction in view, which is so clearly pointed out in Scripture (Matt. i. 20, 25; Luke i. 35; John i. 1–14), we shall have no difficulty in seeing that the *anima* assimilates to itself and becomes,

by the law of subordination and coördination, one with everything beneath it; that is, with the *mens*, the *animus*, and the *corpus*. This, in theological language, is called regeneration, which consists in putting off and rejecting whatsoever is evil and false in the exterior *mens* and the *animus*, and in putting on from the *anima*, or rather from the Lord through the *anima* and from the interior *mens*, a new exterior *mens*, and a new *animus*, and thus having the *external man* entirely renewed. This is meant by what the Apostle says about "putting off the old man, and putting on the new." (Eph. iv. 22, 23; Col. iii. 9, 10.) But in the Lord's case this process of putting off the infirm humanity from the mother, and putting on the Divine Humanity from the Father within Him, is called *Glorification;* which process He effected from himself, that is, from his own *anima*, which, as already said, was Jehovah, Life itself, and infinite, and by himself, that is, by his own power.* In man's case this process, called regeneration, extends downwards only to his *animus*, or to the external of his spirit, and not to his material body. But in the Lord's case the process of glorification extended through all the degrees of the Humanity to the very flesh and bones of his natural body; so that, unlike all other men, He arose with his glorified natural Body complete, as He declared when He said—"A spirit [or a man in his risen state] hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." (Luke xxiv. 39.) But his Body, as Swedenborg says, was "no longer *material* but *Divine Substantial*."

From this psychological sketch of man, drawn from

the enlightened Swedenborg, we are in a position to answer the question so often put to the New Church, namely, "Had the Lord a human soul?" which, it is alleged, He must have had if, as the Apostle says, "He was in all things like unto his brethren" (Heb. ii. 17); or if, as Swedenborg says, "His Humanity from the mother was in itself like the humanity of another man." (*D. L.* 35.) We answer that the Lord had *not a human soul* in the sense of *anima*, for in this He was, owing to his conception, Infinite and Divine; but He had, as to the humanity from the mother, a *human animus*, and in this respect He was "like unto his brethren." By glorification, however, his *animus* and also his body became, as we have seen, Divine; and therefore He ceased not only to be "like unto his brethren," but infinitely to be distinguished and exalted above them. How erroneous, then, it must be to think of the Lord as He is now, since his full glorification, as "being in all things like unto his brethren." For those who thus falsely think of Him (as is the case with all who adopt the common theology) can only think of his Humanity or Body as being like that of any good man, and not infinite and Divine, "in which all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily;" and consequently they cannot, in a true sense, think of Him as being "one with the Father," and as the one only Object of supreme love and worship.

Now the term *soul*, as already said, is so indistinct and obscure as not to point out this important distinction between the *anima* and the *animus*, which it is essentially necessary to see, in order that we

may have a correct view of the psychology of man, and likewise a correct idea of the Lord, especially during the process of his glorification. Those who are not in the habit of studying Swedenborg in his own language, are in danger—although the venerable Clowes, in his translations, endeavored to obviate it by printing in many cases the terms *anima* and *animus* with brackets—of not making this distinction, and consequently of forming either an obscure or erroneous notion about it.

"*Operation*," says 'C. B.' "is not a *part* of man at all:" This must appear strange to my opponent himself, when he reflects that, without operation a man has no manifest life, and consequently no usefulness. He might as well be standing or lying still, without motion, like a statue. Surely *operation*, instead of being no *part* of man at all, is one of the essential parts, of which the soul and the body are the two other essential parts.

My friend does not, he says, "undertake to justify or defend the Athanasian creed." This is a concession to our arguments; but let him know that this creed is the basis of orthodoxy. The time will come when no enlightened Christian will justify or defend it.

"The argument," says 'C. B.,' "that 'the Humanity of Christ is divine because in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily' is inconclusive. God dwells in his people; are they therefore divine, or is their humanity divine?"

It is nowhere said that "ALL *the fulness* of the Godhead" dwells in his people. It is true that

"they receive of his fulness," and that He presents to them "all his fulness;" but they cannot, as being finite, receive "ALL the fulness of the Godhead;" for none but an infinite Person could receive the entire Godhead, or "have all things that the Father hath" (John xvi. 15). The Socinians have tried this argument, and have failed.*

I am yours, etc., A. V.

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* In respect to the terms *anima*, *mens* and *animus*, discussed above, a clear idea of which is indispensable to a genuine psychology, or to a right knowledge of the human soul and its constitution, we will confirm from Swedenborg what is there presented as a right view of the subject.

"The *anima* is a man's inmost principle." (*C. L.* 158.) "The *anima* is a superior spiritual substance, and receives influx immediately from God." (*Doct. of Influx* 8.) "The *anima* is the inmost principle of man's life, and is from the father, and is clothed with a body from the mother." (*A. C.* 6716, 10125.) "The *mens* or rational mind receives life through the *anima* from God." (*Influx* 8.)

"The *mens* or mind is composed of will and understanding." (*D. L. W.* 239, 372, 387.) "The interiors of man which belong to his mind are distinguished by discrete degrees." (*Ib.* 186, 203.) "Thus there is a natural, spiritual and celestial mind." (*Ib.* 239, 260.) "The natural mind is composed of spiritual, and at the same time of natural, substances." (*Ib.* 257, 260, 270, 273.) "It surrounds and includes the spiritual and celestial mind." (*Ib.* 260.) "The natural mind is in its form or image a world, and the spiritual mind is in its form or image a heaven." (*Ib.* 270.)

But as to the *animus*, Swedenborg defines it as being below the *mens*, and "as being the form, or as consisting of the ideas of the common or external sensory, and as the active and living principle of all changes in the body." (*Animal Kingdom*,

part vii., p. 89.) Thus the *animus* is proximately connected with the body, and in the face of the body we behold the affections, passions and emotions of the *animus*. See *A. C.* 4326, Latin text.

Without pursuing the subject further, we have here a psychological analysis from Swedenborg of the human soul, which is very clear and intelligible, and such as by reflection we may know and feel to be true.

In the *Apocalypse Explained*, No. 750, the author gives seven significations in which the term *soul* is employed in the Word of God, which we will here adduce:—1. The term *anima*, soul in general, signifies man. 2. Specifically the life of the body. 3. The life of the spirit of man. 4. The faculty of understanding. 5. The term *soul* signifies Divine Truth. 6. Spiritual life. 7. Living soul signifies life in general. All these significations are abundantly proved by Scripture.

LETTER VI.

THE TRINITY IN ONE DIVINE PERSON.

SIR:—I am glad that my learned opponent has left the dark province of church councils, and come back again to the Word of God. For it is proverbial that nothing has so much darkened "the whole counsel of God" as these church synods, from the Council of Nice to that of Trent, in which the worship of saints, images, relics, bones, etc., has been sanctioned and established.

The discussion as it now stands may, for the benefit of your numerous and intelligent readers, be thus briefly stated:—The New Church admits of but one Divine Person, "in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily," who is the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus one Lord, and one undivided faith in Him, is the only faith of the Church of the New Jerusalem. For we know that He is not only the "Author and Finisher of our faith," but that when our faith is directed to Him, it is at the same time directed to the Father—"whoso seeth me seeth the Father"—and to all the fulness of Deity. This fulness, it cannot be doubted, is the Divine Trinity; consequently our faith is directed at once to the Trinity as concentrated in the Divine Person of Jesus.

My opponent adduces the passage in Ephesians iii. 19—"That ye might be filled with *all the fulness*

of God," alleging that if a Christian can be filled with all the fulness of God, therefore his humanity has as great a claim to divinity as that of Christ. But, as stated in my former letters, although God presents to us "all his fulness," and although "we receive *of* his fulness" (John i. 16), yet we cannot receive ALL his fulness, still less can "ALL the Godhead dwell bodily" in the Christian, as it does in Jesus Christ. The sun presents to us *all the fulness* of its light and heat; it withholds nothing from us; but can we receive all its fulness? We only receive "of its fulness" as much as we can sustain. But all the fulness of the "Sun of Righteousness" dwells bodily in Jesus, from whom we must receive whatever of fulness we can sustain. True Christians, and angels, or the "spirits of just men made perfect in heaven," are constantly receiving a greater measure of this fulness; but they can never arrive at a period when they can be said to have received "*all* the fulness," for they are finite, and "*all* the fulness" is infinite fulness, which no finite being can possibly receive. There is only one that could receive "the Spirit without measure" (John iii. 34), or in infinite fulness; and that one is the Lord Jesus Christ. I am sure that if my learned opponent who is a firm believer in the Deity of Christ, will reflect for a moment on what is here said, he will not join with the Socinian in arguing against us.

Whereas the opposite position maintained by my opponent is, that there are three Persons of the Godhead, each of whom, as the creed expresses it, is "by himself God and Lord." Thus the faith of such

believers must needs be distracted; nor can they have one undivided faith directed to one Object of worship, or to One God. But I must not forget that my intelligent friend has ceased "to justify or defend the Athanasian Creed," and therefore I shall say nothing more about it. I will only add that nowhere in Scripture is it said that we are to pray to the Father "for the sake of the Son, or of Christ." It is indeed said in our common version, in one passage, (Ephesians iv. 32,) "Even as God *for Christ's sake* hath forgiven you;" but on referring to the Greek text, we read *en to Christo*, and every student knows that the passage should read thus:—"as *God in Christ* hath forgiven you." This true rendering conveys quite another idea, as it shows us that *God in Christ* is one Person and not two. The translators having two Persons in their thought, so rendered it. But no criticism is required to show that the common version of the passage is erroneous.

I will merely state that the Church of the New Jerusalem thankfully accepts the common version of the Scriptures, as being, with but few exceptions of which the above is an instance, correct. We only require the absolute literal sense, which, including the marginal readings, the common version for the most part gives. We require no learned twistings of the obvious, literal sense, to confirm and illustrate our doctrines. I mention this fact, because some may suppose that we require, like the Unitarians, an entirely new version as the basis of our doctrinal system; but this is by no means the case.

Whilst, however, it is nowhere said that we are to pray to the Father "for the sake of Christ," yet most true it is that we are to pray "in his NAME," for *his name* involves the idea of his nature, quality, and attributes; and as his Person is the personal manifestation of the Father who dwells in Him as the soul dwells in the body, when we direct our worship and prayers to Him alone, we truly pray to the Father in his name. That his name is not a mere word consisting of so many letters, but his own divine Personal Form, or his Humanity, is evident from many declarations, but especially from this—"Father, glorify *thy name;* then came there a voice from heaven, saying,—I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." (John xii. 28.) Here, *thy name* means the Humanity or Person of Jesus, which was the only subject of glorification. Nor must we consider that the "voice from heaven" is the Father's voice, as a distinct Person from the Son; for it is expressly declared that "no man hath at any time heard the Father's voice." (John v. 37.) But a voice from heaven was a revelation or a declaration of the Divine Truth as to the process of glorification, on which process the work of redemption and atonement mainly depended, and also as to the nature of the Humanity thus glorified.

That we should have a right conception of the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost (for it is the same term in the Greek), as the third essential of the Trinity, every thinking Christian must admit. It is impossible to enjoy the true light of the Gospel unless we see clearly what the Holy Spirit is, and know some-

thing of its action or operation. The Scriptures clearly show us both these important points. The meaning of the term *spirit* both in Hebrew and Greek, is *breath* or *wind*. We often read in the Old Testament of the Spirit of God, and in three places of the "Spirit of his Holiness," or the "Spirit of Holiness," rendered not so literally "his Holy Spirit." (Psalm li. 11; Isaiah lxiii. 10, 11.) Nowhere do we read of the Spirit as a Person distinct from God himself, but as the action or influence of God operating upon all, and especially upon men to regenerate and save them. Thus, "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. i. 2.) Here the Spirit of God, it is evident, is not a personality separate from God, but the influence, action or operation of God. Again, "God *breathed* into man's nostrils the *breath* (or spirit) of life," etc. (Gen. ii. 7.) God did not breathe into man a person, but a "breath of life." No term can be more appropriate to denote the living action of God's all-pervading life. Again, "I will pour out my *Spirit* upon all flesh," etc. (Joel ii. 28.) God did not pour out a personality, but a *breath* or spirit of life, to denote his all-vivifying influence or operation. That this spirit was indicative of the Holy Spirit of which we read in the New Testament, is evident from Acts ii. 17. The Spirit came upon the Apostles *not as a Person*, but as a "mighty wind." (Verse 2.)

But we read in John vii. 39, "the Holy Spirit was not yet (that is, did not yet exist), because Jesus was not yet glorified." The term *given* is in italics, to denote that it is not expressed in the original.

Here it is evident that the specific thing meant by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, did not exist before the glorification of Jesus. It is true that prior to the glorification of Jesus there was the Spirit of God, but not specifically the "Holy Spirit," as after the glorification.

We read in Matt. i. 18, 20, and in Luke i. 35, of the Holy Ghost or Spirit, prior to the glorification of Jesus, and prior to the period when it is expressly said that the "Holy Spirit was not." (John v. 32.) But the reason why we thus read of the Holy Spirit is because the Humanity of Jesus was then about to be conceived and born in the world. This Divine Power, or the "Power of the Highest," as it is also called, was then operative in the womb of the virgin forming his Humanity, which afterwards, when Jesus was glorified, came forth from his Humanity with seven-fold efficacy, "to save to the uttermost" (Heb. viii. 25), and to reach and heal every case of sinful depravity that ever did or that ever can occur. This seven-fold efficacy is denoted in Isaiah xxx. 26, by "the light of the moon being as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun seven-fold as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people and healeth the stroke of their wound." Thus prior to the incarnation and glorification, the operation of the Spirit of God was "as the light of the moon" as it then operated through the finite medium of angels or of the angelic heaven; but since the glorification, it operates through the infinite Medium of the Divine Humanity, and is thus seven-fold greater in its power, de-

noted by the "light of the sun being as the light of seven days," when redemption was accomplished, as signified "by binding up the breach of his people and healing the stroke of their wound." It must not be considered that the rays of the Divine Sun of Righteousness were thereby changed; but by being centred in the Divine Humanity, in which "all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily," they were transmitted by our "Saviour God" with seven-fold efficacy to regenerate and save mankind. The rays of the natural sun, by being concentrated in the focus of a lens, are not thereby changed, but are rendered, as it were, seven-fold more efficacious in their operation. And so it was by the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, as centred in the Divine Person of Jesus. Thus the Lord since the glorification of his Humanity, acts by his Holy Spirit *immediately* upon all, but prior to the glorification He acted *mediately* through heaven. To signify this important difference, it is said in the passage already quoted, that the "Holy Spirit was *not yet*, because Jesus was not yet glorified." It belongs to a true theology to point out this most important distinction.

But after the resurrection, or after the glorification of Jesus, "He breathed upon his disciples and said, Receive ye the Holy Spirit." (John xx. 22.) Thus we may say, in contradistinction to what is said in John vii. 39, quoted above, that the Holy Spirit *did then exist*, because Jesus was *then* glorified. Now Jesus, it is evident, did not breathe a person upon his disciples, but a life-giving influence, which

could, from himself, operate in all "who come unto Him as the author of their salvation" (Heb. v. 9), the graces of regeneration. When we compare this *breathing* or living action of Jesus with the *breathing* of Jehovah God in Gen. ii., as quoted above, we have the most powerful evidence that Jesus in his Divine Humanity is one and the same with Jehovah God, since there can be but one Breather or Giver of life. If you say that in Genesis it is meant merely natural or physical life, and in John moral and spiritual life, I reply, that the giver of the one is the giver of the other, as there can be but one Source or Giver of life.

Even prior to the full glorification of Jesus, it is said that "a *virtue* went out of Him and healed them all." (Luke vi. 19.) Now, this *virtue* or *power* which went out of Jesus was the holy proceeding influence which, after the full glorification of his Humanity, went out of Him in all its infinite fulness. This virtue or power is evidently the same as the Holy Spirit; but are we to construe this *virtue*, or this healing and life-giving *power*, into a person? Certainly not. This *virtue* is now, and ever will be, going forth from Him as the Holy Spirit, and operating upon all of us; and if we do not resist it by refusing to believe in Him and to obey his precepts, it will also heal us of all our spiritual diseases, that is, save us from our sins.

To take, therefore, a proper view of the Holy Spirit, we should take it from the exposition which the Lord gives us when He breathed upon his disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." The

question now comes, shall we find this in perfect accordance with everything that is said of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament? We have no hesitation in saying that it is in the most perfect accordance. He calls it the "Spirit of Truth" (John xiv. 19), and He calls himself the Truth (John xiv. 6); consequently the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of himself. Again, He says that "He sends it from the Father" (John xv. 26); because the Father is in Him, and He consequently sends it of himself from the Father.

The Apostle says, "the Lord (meaning Christ) is that Spirit." (2 Cor. iii. 17.) Thus the Lord is not only the giver or sender of the Holy Spirit, but it is identified with himself; showing us clearly that the Holy Spirit is the Lord himself acting upon us by his life of love and wisdom. And it was the Spirit, or as is evident from the commencement of every address, the Lord himself, who addresses the churches in the Apocalypse. Compare the end of each address with the beginning, and this with the first chapter of that divine Book, and you will find that not only the Apostle identifies as above the Holy Spirit with the Lord, but that the Lord also identifies the Spirit with himself; thus showing that the Spirit is the divine action or operation of himself upon all things, but especially upon angels and men. He thus worketh in us what is well-pleasing in his sight, and makes us perfect, etc. (Heb. xiii. 21), but does He not work or operate in us and "dwell in us" by the influence and operation of his Spirit? This, which is not a mere inference but a direct

statement, plainly shows us that the Holy Spirit is not a Person distinct from Jesus, but the operation of Jesus himself working in us to regenerate and save us.

But every one knows that where an action or operation is, there the actor or operator is essentially present. In a former letter my opponent said, alluding to the "breathing of Jesus upon his disciples," that the Holy Spirit is not a mere *breath*, but a personality. If we look physiologically at the *breath*, we shall find it to be a result of the joint action of the heart and lungs. Thus the breath is the proximate cause of all living action in the body. A man could not move a limb or utter a word if he did not breathe. Hence we see how appropriate the terms *breath* and *breathing* are, as employed in the Scriptures, to signify the Holy Spirit. The Psalmist says that all the host of heaven were made by the *breath* of his mouth. (Ps. xxiii. 6.) This plainly shows us that the *breath* of the Lord is the same as his Spirit.

But it is supposed that the Holy Spirit must be a Person, because, at the baptism of Jesus, it was seen "descending like a dove." But a dove is not a person. The reason why a dove appeared on that occasion, was to teach us that that bird which was offered as a sacrifice at the time of circumcision (Luke ii. 24), was a symbol of the graces of regeneration denoted by baptism; for circumcision meant regeneration and purification, and signified nearly the same as baptism, and in the supreme sense, the divine graces of glorification which the Lord's bap-

tism involved. It is again argued that because the Holy Spirit is called the "Comforter," it must, therefore, be a Person; whereas, nothing is more common in Scripture than to personify things and attributes. Thus the serpent is personified as being gifted with reason and speech (Gen. iii. 1); but every one knows that a serpent is not a person. Again, the blood of Abel is said to have "a voice and to cry out" (Gen. iv. 10); thus personal attributes are ascribed to blood, but blood is not therefore a *person*. These personifications in Scripture are innumerable, and your readers will at once have many occur to their remembrance. The Holy Spirit in Greek is neuter, and in all cases it should in the common version have neuter pronouns applied to it; that is, *it*, and not *he* and *him*, as in John xiv. 17; but our translators have also in this case erred, obviously from the idea of conceiving of the Holy Spirit as a Person. It is true that the term "Comforter" is masculine, and of course has masculine pronouns applied to it. But this, we have shown, is a personification. The Lord calls the Holy Spirit both the "Spirit of Truth" and the "Comforter" for a specific reason: as the "Spirit of Truth" it teaches and illustrates, which is eminently a predicate of truth; but as the "Comforter" it is the "Spirit of Love," for it is eminently a predicate of love to comfort and console, especially after temptations and trials. In both cases it is the Lord himself who teaches, illustrates and comforts us; but this He does by the operation of his Spirit.

If space permitted I might show that many things

said of the Spirit cannot be said of it as of a Person, but as of a life-giving influence from the Lord; thus, when the Apostle says, "We have all been made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. xii. 13), it is evident that we cannot drink a person, but we may be said to drink or imbibe his Spirit in the sense of his life-giving influence. Again, we may by disobedience and sin "quench the spirit" (1 Thess. v. 19), but we cannot be said to quench a person.

But upon what basis does C. B. found the idea of the Holy Spirit as being a Person? Upon no basis whatever. It is nowhere said in Scripture that the Holy Spirit is a Person. Whence then does my opponent get his idea of the Spirit as a Person? From the decisions of church councils, which, as demonstrated in my last letter, have enacted the greatest absurdities, even the adoration of images and relics; and to maintain these absurdities have kindled the cruel fires of persecution, and sanctioned the tortures of the inquisition. But my opponent infers, from certain things said of the Holy Spirit, that it is a person.

Thus he says:—

"He, the Holy Spirit [it should *not*, as shown above, be *He*, but *It*], has proper names, is invested with personal attributes, has ascribed to him [it] personal acts, is joined to the Father and the Son as a third Person [this is nowhere stated in the Word], and makes personal appearances. If these (says C. B.) do not imply what we call personality, language must be a mere enigma."

He also says:—

"That the Holy Spirit loves, grieves, is vexed, speaks, acts, gives life, bears witness, helps our infirmities, which (he says) are all personal acts."

From these predicates, my opponent *infers*, that the Holy Spirit must be a Person. But nothing can be more fallacious than to found a most important doctrine of Scripture upon mere *inference*, and not upon direct and plain statements of Scripture. The theology of the New-Church, on the contrary, founds its doctrine of the Holy Spirit upon the direct statement of the Gospel, and believes that it is the life-giving breath or Spirit of Jesus, according to his own declaration in John xx. 22, when "He breathed on his disciples, and said, Receive ye the Holy Spirit;" and as a man, when regenerate, is an "image of God," so he, in like manner, in his degree, acts by his spirit upon men and objects around him. Is not his *operation* felt and known wherever he speaks, acts, and moves? But is his operation a person separate from himself? By no means. It is most true that in man's case his operation is of very limited extent, and moreover very feeble in its efficacy. But in the Lord's case it is infinite and omnipotent, and universal, that is, everywhere present, both in the least as well as the greatest things, "numbering the hairs of our heads," as well as conducting the planets and sidereal systems in their orbits.

But my opponent *infers* that the Spirit is a Person, because "personal acts and attributes are ascribed to it." In Hebrew there are only two genders: everything, as in French, Italian, and in some other

languages, is either *male* or *female*. But are all things, because thus designated, *persons?* and because personal acts and the personal pronouns *he* and *she*, etc., are ascribed to them, are they therefore personal agents? Is *salt* a person because it is said "to have lost *his* savor"? (Matt. v. 13.) How fallacious, therefore, it is to *infer* that a thing is a person because it has personal acts and personal pronouns ascribed to it! Nothing, as is shown above, is more common in Scripture than to ascribe personal acts to objects. But in Greek the Holy Spirit, as said above, is *neuter*, and therefore not a Person. It is true, as also stated, that the Comforter or Paraclete is masculine, but it is distinctly declared that the Lord himself is the Paraclete (1 John ii. 1); in the common version the term *paracleton* is here rendered *advocate*, but it should be rendered the same as in the Gospel—*Comforter*. Here, then, the Lord is again identified with the Spirit; for He is expressly called the *Paraclete*, which plainly shows that the Comforter, or the Holy Spirit, is not a distinct and separate Person from himself. The Lord is said "to baptize with the Holy Spirit." To baptize is to regenerate us, and this He does by his operation upon us and within us; He consequently does it by his own life-giving action on our souls, and not by a person separate and distinct from himself.

I am, yours, etc. A. V.

LETTER VII.

THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT.

SIR:—In the last letter of my learned opponent there are only two or three points which call, by way of rejoinder, for any remark. My friend says, "that no statement of mine has so shocked him as that the Holy Spirit (especially alluded to in the New Testament as coming from Jesus, and as distinguished from the Spirit of God mentioned in the Old) did not exist prior to the glorification of Jesus; and he hopes that I shall carefully and prayerfully reconsider it." Now I beg my opponent and your intelligent readers to bear in mind, that the statement in question is not mine, but that it is declared by John that "the Holy Spirit *was not yet*, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (Chap. vii. 39.) I will only refer your readers to my last letter for an explanation of this divine declaration.

In reference to the prayer of the Apostle that the Ephesians "might be filled with all the fulness of God," my opponent observes that, according to my explanation, "the Apostle prayed that the church might be filled with what it could not be filled with." In reply to this I will only state, that the Lord commands us to be "perfect, even as our Father, which is in heaven, is perfect" (Matt. v. 48); and "to be holy, even as He is holy." But this we can never

become, because He is *infinitely* perfect and holy. Nevertheless, we are to strive after perfection and holiness; in like manner we are to strive "to receive this fulness of God," without ever being able to receive *all* the fulness of God.

To your readers in general permit me to state two tests by which to judge whether a system of doctrine be truly Christian and Evangelical or not. The first is, that that system which has most of Christ in it, in which He is the centre and the sun, and the all in all, is most likely to be the truly Christian system. The second test is, that that system which has most of the Gospel in it, and which is most imbued with its spirit and its life, is most truly Evangelical, and most deserving of the name. Let the system of Christian doctrine advocated and taught in the Church of the New Jerusalem be judged of according to these tests, and we do not fear the result.

The doctrine of the *Atonement* is one of the vital doctrines of Christianity. There can be no true understanding of Christianity without it. Its practical tendency, also, when properly understood, is most essentially conducive to regeneration and salvation. I therefore solicit the attention of your readers to the following statements, which involve and explain, as far as space will admit, the doctrines of the New Church on this subject.

The doctrine of the Atonement is delivered by the Apostle, as all Christians admit, in the following declaration:—"All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit,

that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." (2 Cor. v. 18, 19.) The term *Atonement* is, in the original, the same as *reconciliation*, and means *agreement*, the being *at-one*, likewise concord and harmony. The Lord also requires atonement or reconciliation as the first requisite of all worship; thus He says, "First be *reconciled* (*atoned*) to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." (Matt. v. 24.) There can be no true and acceptable worship which does not spring from atonement or reconciliation.

But *love* is evidently the source of all reconciliation. "God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son," etc. It was, therefore, from infinite love that "God was in Christ *atoning* or reconciling the world unto himself." Thus the entire Gospel, in its practical tendency, is the ministry of reconciliation or atonement, that man may be *at-one* with God, and also *at-one* with his fellow-man. This is the meaning of the Greek *Katallage* or atonement.

The *necessity* of the atonement is also clearly shown by the same Apostle; "for (says he) if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life; and not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *we have received the atonement.*" (Rom. v. 10, 11.) Owing to the fall, mankind had become enemies to God by being, as to their nature, alienated

from Him, and this more and more until the Lord came into the world to redeem man, and to effect the atonement. The Apostle gives in Rom. i. 21-32 a dreadful account of this enmity to God.

The Being who accomplished this atonement was "God himself in Christ," not a supposed second person of the Godhead, but God himself as declared by the Apostle. It is also universally declared in the Prophets that Jehovah is our Redeemer and our Saviour, and that, "beside Him there is no Saviour." The passages which declare this are too numerous to quote here.* "The child born and the son given" is called "the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father also Emmanuel, God with us." This Jehovah, or God in Christ, was our Saviour, and He reconciled the world unto himself, or effected the atonement. It was Jehovah before whom the Baptist, "as a voice crying in the wilderness," prepared the way (Luke iii. 4); but it was Jesus before whom, as all believe, John prepared the way; consequently Jehovah and Jesus are one and the same divine Person. Those, therefore, who think that it was a second Person in the Godhead, and not the one Jehovah himself, who became the Redeemer, do not think in agreement with the Gospel, and are not, according to the tests stated above, truly Evangelical.

Having seen the meaning of atonement, its necessity, and also the Divine Being, or "God in Christ," by whom it was effected, we will now proceed to

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* See above, p. 55.

show by what means it was accomplished. "God manifest in the flesh" is a fact which teaches us that God took upon himself our nature by being born into the world, of the virgin Mary, in the Person of Jesus Christ, as the great means of redemption and atonement. Whilst, however, we see that the human nature thus assumed from the Virgin was in all things "like unto that of his brethren," yet we beg your readers to remember that, as to his soul or "inward man" being conceived of Jehovah, He was, as shown in my former letters, infinitely to be distinguished from all other men who had merely human fathers.* The nature thus "born of a woman" was, according to the Apostle, "the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii. 3), that is, born with infirmity, frailty, and with tendencies to evil; yet "no man could convince Him of sin" (John vii. 46), neither "was guile found in his mouth." In this nature thus assumed "He was laden with our iniquities," He "bore our sicknesses and infirmities," for "how can a man be clean that is born of a woman"? (Job xxv. 4.) "For verily," says the Apostle, "He took not on himself the nature of angels [that is, a pure or regenerated humanity, such as angels have], but He took on Him the seed of Abraham [that is, a fallen or infirm humanity], that in all things He might be made like unto his brethren," etc. (Heb. ii. 16, 17.) Again: "For He hath made Him to be *sin* for us who knew no *sin*, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

* See above, p. 85.

(2 Cor. vi. 21.) Here we entreat the reader to mark the difference so clearly pointed out in this passage by the Apostle, between *evil* and *sin*. Evil, or rather tendencies to evil, are inherited from our parents and ancestors, and are the lot of every man. Jesus, as being born of a woman, was not exempted from this lot. He by inheritance was made "*sin* [in the sense of hereditary evil] for us;" but, unlike all other men, "He knew no sin;" that is, did not suffer his hereditary evil to become actual sin. I am aware that some commentators render the term sin, *amârtia*, in the first clause, *sin*-offering; but this is not its meaning. A man commits sin when, as James says, "he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed," etc. But Jesus was never drawn away and enticed, and, therefore, never committed sin.

The reason why the Lord assumed our infirm nature was that He might bring himself into contact with the powers of darkness, and thus, by repeated temptations from the manger to the cross, conquer and subdue them, and so accomplish redemption, or "deliver us from the hand of our enemies," and "thus destroy the works of the devil." For had He not assumed our infirm nature, that is, a nature subject to temptation, "He could not have been tempted in all points like as we are;" for in "that He himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." (Heb. ii. 18.) The enmity first to be destroyed in effecting the atonement, was in *his own flesh* (Ephesians ii. 15, 16); or "*in himself*," (Marginal reading.) "For He bare our sins in his own body," and "made peace

or reconciliation through the blood of his cross." (Col. i. 20.) Having thus "abolished the enmity in his flesh," He effected a reconciliation or an atonement between the human nature He assumed and God, or the Divine Nature within Him. The human and the divine natures in Him became, by glorification, which is involved in reconciliation, AT-ONE, as He himself says, "I and the Father are *one*." This is the Atonement. This great Atonement was represented by all the sacrifices and burnt-offerings in the Jewish Church; for they all pointed in the supreme sense to this work of redemption, and in a subordinate sense they were types of the regeneration or salvation of man. But especially did the sacrifice of the lamb, morning and evening, and also of the pascal lamb, typify this great sacrifice of Jesus Christ, "as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

A proper view of the institution and meaning of the Levitical sacrifices teaches us that thereby was not meant that the sufferings due to the worshipper should be transferred to the victim, slain and offered up, but that the victim, whether a lamb, a sheep, or a goat, etc., should represent, or be a type of the affections of charity and love, which are the essential elements of all true worship. The sacrifices were said "to be holy unto the Lord;" and in relation to Jesus Christ they signified, as the term sacrifice means, the sanctification or the making holy of every principle of the humanity He assumed to the Divine Nature within Him. Hence He says, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be

sanctified through the truth" (John xvii. 19), showing us that his sanctification is the cause of our sanctification. When, therefore, He had sanctified his humanity "by abolishing the enmity in his flesh," He not only accomplished the work of atonement "in himself," but He prepared the means and opened the way, "a new and living way, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb. x. 20), or glorified Humanity, by which atonement or reconciliation with Him can be effected in all others who will come unto Him, "and obey Him as the author of their salvation." That the Lord, "as the captain of our salvation, became perfect through suffering," is declared by the Apostle. (Heb. ii. 10.) But this could not have been said of Him if the human nature He assumed from the mother had been already perfect. The "sufferings by which He became perfect" are denoted in other parts of Scripture by "his blood," as in Gethsemane and on the cross. "Truly, then, are we saved by his blood," meaning his sufferings and death, by which He accomplished the atonement. Hence it is that "we have redemption through *his blood.*" (Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14.)

By his sufferings, however, we do not understand his agony on the cross only, but his daily labor and suffering from the manger to the cross. As He requires us to bear our cross *daily*, so He, as our divine example, bore his cross daily, that is, *daily* submitted himself to those states of temptation by which our redemption was effected. His last and most grievous temptation, by which redemption and atonement were accomplished, was that of the

cross; but it is a great error to suppose that this was the only temptation or suffering by which redemption was wrought.

To sum up: We have discussed in this brief space, not so fully as I could have wished, the important doctrine of the Atonement: 1, its meaning; 2, its necessity for the salvation of man; 3, the Divine Being who effected it; 4, the reason why He assumed our nature; and, 5, the process by which He accomplished it—namely, "first, by abolishing the enmity in his flesh or in himself," and thus preparing the way by glorifying himself and supplying the means of abolishing this "enmity against God," in all who will but come unto Him in faith and love, and "obey Him as the author of their salvation."

The beautiful and most practical tendency of this view of atonement is evident. We learn from it that all the power "by which we can work out our own salvation" (Phil. ii. 12), that is, become reconciled or atoned to God, is from the great Atonement which the Lord accomplished. Truly, then, we must say that "without Him we can do nothing." (John xv. 5.) It is also by that power of redeeming or atoning love that we can be truly reconciled with one another. For man by nature is not only at enmity with God, but he is also at enmity with his fellow-men, and he requires to be reconciled to both. It is by this power that we can "follow the Lord in the regeneration;" can "continue with Him in his temptations;" can "overcome as He overcame;" can "walk after the spirit in newness of life, and resist and overcome the works of the flesh," etc.

But what is the doctrine called orthodoxy, which my learned opponent will have to defend in opposition to the view of the atonement here given? I know the ground upon which he stands. But we will state his view of the subject from the authentic source against which, I presume, he cannot object. This source is the second of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England; in which we read, that

"The Son took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, and that He truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, *to reconcile his Father to us*, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men."

This article, contrary to the declaration of the Apostle, and to the view stated above, affirms "that the Father, by the sacrifice of the Son, *was reconciled* to man;" and not as the Apostle affirms, "the world or mankind *was reconciled* to the Father." The article also implies that "the Father received the atonement;" whereas the Apostle, in opposition to this statement, affirms that mankind, through our Lord Jesus Christ, *received* the atonement or reconciliation (Rom. v. 10, 11). This doctrine also implies two Divine Persons, who, although declared in the creed to be in all respects co-equal, and of the same nature, yet one is supposed to be full of anger and vindictive justice which can only be appeased and satisfied by the sufferings and blood of the other as an innocent victim! This orthodoxy, through Dr. Watts, sings in public worship as follows:—

"Rich were the drops of Jesu's blood
That calmed his frowning face,
That sprinkled o'er the burning throne,
And turned the wrath to grace."

Here it is taught that the *Unchangeable* turns or changes from wrath to grace. It is true that the Scriptures ascribe anger to God; because, to the wicked, when they suffer the consequences of their wickedness, they erroneously think that God is angry, and that He is "a consuming fire." But God does not and cannot appear to the wicked as He really is, but He appears according to [that is, in correspondence with] their states; hence it is said, "To the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful, and to the *froward* thou wilt show thyself *froward*." There can be no anger and vengeance, which are evil passions, in God. "*Fury* is not in me, saith the Lord." (Isaiah xxvii. 4.)

But what is the practical tendency of the prevailing doctrine of the Atonement? A man's own nature and character are necessarily influenced by the ideas which he has of God. If he can ascribe, as by the prevailing doctrine of the vicarious Atonement he can, wrath and vindictive justice to his Maker, he will think it no sin to cherish such qualities in himself. Such is the practical tendency of this doctrine as it now prevails. May not the vindictive spirit with which Christians of various sects have often persecuted one another be ascribed to this cause? But it will not be so in the Church of the New Jerusalem.

I entreat your readers to compare these two doc-

trinal views of the Atonement together. Let them look first on this picture, and then on that; and they will see, after a little reflection, that the doctrine of the New Church on this important subject is most Scriptural and rational, and worthy of all acceptation. Whereas, seeing that the orthodox doctrine as expressed above from its authentic sources, is so contrary to Scripture, and so revolting to every moral sense and perception implanted by the Creator in the human mind, we need not wonder that such men as Mr. Jowett, of Oxford, and other enlightened theologians, have risen up against it, as not expressing the wisdom of God revealed in his Word. My learned opponent, in considering the points and positions here maintained, will bear in mind that no declaratory assertion will be permitted to pass in the stead of Scriptural and rational proof.

In my next I shall speak of the "Justification of the Sinner before God." Apologizing for a little extra space on this new subject in the discussion,

I am yours, etc.,

A. V.

LETTER VIII.

RECONCILIATION, SACRIFICE AND JUSTIFICATION.

SIR:—I have read my opponent's last letter. I regret that, on account of foreign travel, he is compelled to withdraw from the controversy. I hope that some other, of a similar Christian spirit, will step into the arena and occupy his place. Truth will not suffer by these friendly discussions; and, therefore, I hope they will be continued; especially as I have much that is new to offer on every subject of Theology, to the candid and reflecting of all denominations. Who is there amongst us that does not wish to have brighter views and perceptions, and a more rational as well as a more spiritual and Scriptural discernment of the great truths and facts of revelation? This is the way to improvement, and this is the only means by which the rampant rationalism which now so much prevails in theology, can be met and overthrown.

My last letter was on the Atonement. The doctrine of the New Church on this important subject was stated under the following heads:—1. Its meaning and object. 2. Its necessity for the salvation of mankind. 3. The Divine Being, or "God in Christ," who effected it. 4. The nature of the medium or Humanity He assumed for the purpose. 5. The proc-

ess by which He effected it; and, lastly, its practical tendency in the regeneration and salvation of man.

In opposition to the doctrine advanced, was placed the common doctrine of a vicarious substitution, reconciling, as the orthodox article (the second of the Thirty-nine) says, "the Father to the world or mankind;" and not as the Apostle says, "Reconciling the world to himself." My opponent has not undertaken to defend the common doctrine called orthodox, against my statements and arguments, and therefore I conclude that as, according to his own statement in one of his letters, "he would not defend and justify the Athanasian Creed"—the bulwark of orthodoxy as to the idea of God, so he will not defend and justify the prevailing doctrine of the vicarious atonement.

The only points of any importance in my opponent's reply which require consideration are the terms *satisfaction* and *substitution*, as involved in *his* idea of the Atonement. Now, as to *satisfaction* this is fully involved in the idea of reconciliation, which, as C. B. admits, is the proper meaning of the word *atonement*. For when two parties who have been at enmity, have become reconciled by putting away the ground and causes of the enmity, there is then the most ample *satisfaction* experienced by both, and they mutually love one another, and manifest their satisfaction by their joy and gladness. But this, I am aware, is not my opponent's idea of satisfaction in respect to the atonement. He thinks of a satisfaction rendered to the supposed *vindictive justice* of God, by the sufferings and death of an innocent vic-

tim. But this idea has neither Scripture nor reason to rest upon; and, therefore, is utterly groundless.

Thus, when the Prodigal in the parable which describes the conversion of the sinner and his reconciliation with God, resolved to return to his father's house, the only condition was that of deep humiliation, and of sincere repentance. The father seeing this, "ran to meet him and fell on his neck and kissed him." Here no "vicarious substitute" was required, at the sight of whose sufferings and blood the father's wrath was appeased, and his "vindictive justice" satisfied; but when the Prodigal, by repentance, put away, through God's grace and power, the evil and enmity which separated him from his father, reconciliation ensued, and perfect satisfaction was the result. This satisfaction was denoted by the rejoicing, the "feasting, music, and dancing," which followed. Now, no one can deny that this Parable is truly Evangelical, and that it truly describes the manner in which the sinner is converted to God, and the consequent reconciliation and satisfaction which are the result.

It must, however, be well understood, as explained in my last letter, that no sinner could possibly return to his Father's house, or be reconciled to his God, unless the great Atonement, or Reconciliation between the divine and human Natures in the Person of Jesus Christ, had been accomplished. This is truly not only the great cause of all reconciliation between God and mankind, but the only source of satisfaction and peace. It is an enormous error to suppose that there was any "vindictive justice," as

it is called, in God, which required satisfaction. There is no such attribute in God. In "his love and pity He redeemed us." God was not angry with mankind, for "He so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son," etc. It is most true that "Christ suffered *for us*, the just for the unjust," in order to prepare the way, "the new and living way, his flesh" (Heb. x. 20) or his Divine Humanity, by which we can have access to the "holy of holies," which signified the Divine Nature itself, or the Father within Him.

But his sufferings were not *penal*, that is, they were not endured by Him in the sense of punishment; but they were *purificatory*, that is, were endured as the means of purifying, sanctifying, and glorifying the humanity He had assumed for the purpose of redemption. This is declared both by the Lord and by the Apostle, and therefore admits of no doubt. Hence the Lord says, "for their sakes I *sanctify* myself," etc.; and the Apostle says, "the Captain of our Salvation was made *perfect through sufferings*." (Heb. ii. 10.) This shows us plainly that his sufferings are not to be understood in the sense of punishment, but as the means of being "*made perfect*," that is, of glorifying his humanity. The "chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by his stripes are we healed." But this chastisement and these stripes He submitted to as the means of his glorification, or of his being "made perfect," and not as a "vicarious substitute;" for we have "to follow Him in the regeneration," we have "to be partakers of his sufferings" (1 Peter iv. 13), and

"we have to overcome as He overcame." The idea, then, of a substitution is by no means Scriptural, nor is it rational. For when Moses wished to be a substitute, and to be blotted out in the stead of the people, the Lord said, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." (Exodus xxxii. 32, 33.) Again, the Prophet says, "The son shall not bear (or be a substitute for) the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son." (Ezek. xviii. 20.)

A *sacrifice*, then, does not involve, as my opponent supposes, the idea of a *substitute;* but the term implies, as its etymology plainly indicates, the *making holy* of every principle in the humanity assumed from the Virgin, and sacrificing or consecrating it to the Father or Divinity within Him. In this sense Christ was truly a *sacrifice* for us or for our sakes, "that we might become living *sacrifices*, holy and acceptable unto God." (Rom. xii. 1.) That He sacrificed, or sanctified the human nature He assumed, is clearly involved in what the Apostle declares, when he says "that He abolished in his flesh the enmity," etc., and "that He became perfect through suffering," and also that He *sanctified* himself. (John xvii. 19.) This may be a new idea to my opponent, but as it is declared by the Apostle, I am surprised that my learned friend should say "that it is too absurd for refutation." He should ponder before he makes such an assertion in the face of the Lord and the Apostle.

Now, then, we come to the true doctrine of the justification of the sinner before God. Whether we

say justification or righteousness, it is the same thing, and in Greek is expressed by the same terms, or by terms from the same root. "Christ," says the Apostle, "was raised again for our *justification*." (Rom. iv. 25.) Again, "He hath made Him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the *righteousness* of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 21.)

This, then, is the only ground of our justification, and the only source of our righteousness. By the redemption and atonement of Jesus Christ, and by the consequent glorification of his Humanity—"the new and living way," He is the only source of our justification and righteousness. This is the firm faith of the Church of the New Jerusalem. In our unregenerate and natural state we are all sinners before Him, nor can we be saved but by being justified, that is, made just, holy and righteous by Him.

But how does a man become just and righteous before God? We answer that every dispensation of religion from Adam to the present period was for the purpose of making man just and righteous before God. Thus Adam in his state of integrity was just and righteous. "Noah was a *just* man, and *perfect* before God;" and finally, "the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven," are there because they have been made just and righteous before God. This, then, is the great object of all religion to accomplish. And this, as we have seen, was the chief reason why "God was manifest in the flesh," to accomplish redemption and atonement, without which no man could have been saved, that

is, made just and righteous before Him. "Truly then are we justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

But in order to be justified and righteous before God, we must receive his justice and righteousness, or, as the Apostle says, "we must become partakers of the Divine Nature." Now we partake of his justice and righteousness by faith in Him, "and by doing justly, by loving mercy, and by walking humbly with our God." This justice and righteousness is not imputed to us until by faith it is received and incorporated in us as a principle of life. "He that doeth justice (or righteousness) is just, even as He is just." (John iii. 7.) To do justice, therefore, through faith in Him from whom all justice comes, is, in our belief, the only way of being justified before God.

One of the evil consequences of the fall was this: that man ceased to act justly, or to do justice from God, and began to do justice from himself, and to clothe himself with his own righteousness. By ceasing "to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness (or justice)" through loving his God above all things, and his neighbor as himself, he began to seek righteousness in merely external forms of worship, and from merely external motives of conduct originating in the love of self and of the world. Hence in the Jewish Church the Jew believed that, if he sanctimoniously performed all the external rituals of the Mosaic law, he was justified in the sight of God, forgetting "that God looketh not on the outward appearance, but on the heart."

This was a great delusion. For the merely external observance of those ritual laws could not justify a man before God. Hence the Lord says to his disciples and to his church, "Except your righteousness (or justice) shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Hence also the Apostle says, "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Rom. iii. 20); and again, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Here the Apostle evidently means the deeds of the external ritual law, such as circumcision, washings, sacrifices, oblations, etc. It is a great mistake to suppose that in the above passages the Apostle means the works or deeds of the divine moral law of the Ten Commandments. Because, in respect to this divine law, which in the nature of things cannot be abrogated, he says, "Not the hearers of the law, but the doers of the law, shall be justified" (Rom. ii. 13); and he also says that "the love of the neighbor is the fulfilling of this law" (Rom. xiii.); and the Lord himself declares, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." (Matt. xix. 17.)

The deeds or works proceeding from the external observance of the ritual laws, the Apostle declares were "dead works," from which they should be purified. They were dead because they had no power to effect justification in the sight of God. Hence we may plainly see why the Apostle declared that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight.

When the Apostle said that we are justified by Faith, he meant, as the learned well know, the entire system of Christianity as contrasted with the Law, which meant the entire system of the Mosaic dispensation. Now the principal law of this Christian faith is the "law of love to God and to our neighbor" (Matt. xxii. 37); and it is by this law of faith that we are justified in his sight. It is not, therefore, by *faith only* that we are justified, but by faith, love and good works united. The Church of the New Jerusalem teaches that we are justified, or made just and saved "by a faith which worketh by love," and which manifests itself in the life by those good works to which the Lord alludes when He says, "So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works," etc.

We, therefore, consider it to be a most fatal error, attended, as the history of the church proves, with the most disastrous consequences, to maintain, as modern orthodoxy maintains (see Article XI. of the Church of England), that "a man is justified by faith only." Because this doctrine excludes the idea of charity and good works, or the works of a good and holy life, "the fruits of the Spirit" (Gal. v.) as the essential elements of justification and salvation.

Much has been said and written about justification; some supposing it to be one thing and some another, but all seeming to agree that it is a sudden change, wrought by faith only, in the mind of one who has faith in the merits of Christ. These merits are, like his omnipotence and omniscience, infinite;

and we nowhere read in the Gospel that they are imputed to man. The Scripture universally requires us to labor, to strive, to fight the good fight, etc., that we may be justified. But the prevailing doctrine of justification requires no such thing. It considers a man as merely passive in the work of salvation. Whereas the Apostle commands us "to work out our salvation," etc.; and the Lord says, "Strive to enter in," etc.

The common doctrine is said in the Article to be "full of comfort." Verily it is full of comfort to the merely natural man, as it encourages him in his sloth, and does not arouse him to action, and make him exclaim "What shall I do to be saved?" This doctrine reminds us of the "pillows sewed under all arm-holes, whereby their souls are hunted to death" (Ezek. xiii. 18, 19); these pillows are also "full of comfort" to the natural man. But are they not dreadful obstacles to his salvation?

But I am reminded that my space is filled up. Your intelligent readers will, I trust, compare one system of Justification with the other, and they will soon see which is the most truly Evangelical.

My next subject will be the apostolic doctrine of "The Cross of Christ, and of Him Crucified." In the meantime, believe me, Mr. Editor,

Yours, right truly, A. V.

LETTER IX.

THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF THE CROSS EXPLAINED.

SIR:—In my last letter I gave a statement of the "justification of the sinner before God," as maintained by the Church of the New Jerusalem. This doctrinal statement was shown to arise out of the doctrine of the Atonement, discussed in a previous letter. As no opponent has appeared against these doctrinal statements maintained by the New Church, I have no occasion for reply.

Permit me, however, to state one fact, which I desire earnestly to impress upon the minds of your numerous and intelligent readers. It is this: that all the doctrines of the Church of the New Jerusalem are founded, as your readers will have abundantly seen, on the Word of God *solely*, and not on any supposed revelations made immediately by God to Swedenborg. I am aware that this erroneous supposition commonly prevails amongst those who have not read Swedenborg's works, and who are consequently not rightly informed as to this important point. No theological writer that has ever appeared, has so abundantly confirmed his doctrinal statements and positions by Scripture as Swedenborg. Let his "True Christian Religion" be consulted, and this will be abundantly evident. It is because

there is nothing of the *man* called Swedenborg in the doctrines of the New Church, but because everything is from the Word of God, that we object to being called "Swedenborgians;" but as the world *will* thus designate us, we must put up with it.

I will now, with your permission, proceed, as intimated at the conclusion of my last letter, to state the doctrine of the New Church on "Salvation by the Cross of Christ and Him Crucified." We hear much said respecting the "Cross of Christ," the "Religion of the Cross," and "Christ crucified;" and much depends on the manner in which these expressions are understood. If understood in their truly evangelical sense, and the divine truths hence resulting practised accordingly, no subject of practical Christianity can be of greater importance, and none more calculated to edify the soul in righteousness and holiness than the *Doctrine of the Cross*.

Prior to Christianity the cross was only known as an object to which the greatest suffering and ignominy were attached. As an instrument of punishment it was in general use amongst the Eastern nations, and also among the Greeks and Romans. The greatest crimes were thus expiated by the most excruciating torments that cruelty could devise, or that vengeance could inflict. So great were the torments caused by this dreadful punishment, that Cicero has declared "that the mind, even at the thought of sufferings and agonies so intense, is filled with horror." A word on the various punishments mentioned in Scripture will not, while explaining the doctrine of the cross, be out of place.

There were several kinds of punishment among the Jews; the principal of which were "*stoning*" (Lev. xx. 2), "*hanging on wood or the cross*" (Joshua viii. 29), and "*burning.*" (Lev. xxi. 9.) Those crimes which arose more especially from transgressing and violating the divine Truth of God's Word, were punished by *stoning;* those which were more directly opposed to the divine Goodness were punished by *hanging on wood or the cross;* and those which involved profanation were punished by *burning.* The loss of natural life for the above offences was a type of the loss of spiritual life, under the Christian dispensation, with those who do violence to the Truth of the Word by the indulgence of evil lusts and perverse thoughts, and continue unrepentant through life, and thus bring upon themselves "everlasting punishment" or condemnation, which, under the law, was called the "curse;" hence they who were crucified were said to be "*accursed of God.*" These punishments were permitted and inflicted for the sake of *the end* to be obtained thereby, which is salvation and the preservation of the Church. Hence it was said, "that thy land be not defiled," that is, that the Church may not perish, but be preserved. Thus, according to the letter of the law, the Jews were required to remove evil persons by punishments from among them, that their *typical* religion might subsist and remain until the "*fulness of times,*" or until the Lord came into the world to effect an Atonement and to accomplish Redemption. And, according to the *spirit* of the same laws, Christians are required to remove *evil principles* from *within*

them, that their *real* religion may remain and increase in *fulness to eternity.*

When the divine truths of the Word are thus properly discerned, it will be seen that every sin has its own punishment, and that it will be found impossible to escape the punishment of any sin which we commit, so long as it is indulged and practised. So soon as any known evil is indulged in thought and harbored in the spirit with any degree of complacency or delight, "*it defileth a man,*" and maketh him guilty in the sight of God, and consequently destroys the life of heaven in the soul and removes it to the dark regions of spiritual death and eternal misery. Hence the necessity of punishments, which, however, do not arise from the divine appointments of God, but from the violation of his divine laws of order. Punishments, nevertheless, are permissions of Divine Providence for the sake of salvation. God *wills* the end, and *permits* the means; and these permissions are occasionally presented in the literal sense of the Word under the form of commands, and their infliction assumes the appearance of anger and vengeance as coming from God. A wise parent either punishes a disobedient child, or permits him to be punished, not that he has any approbation or pleasure in the punishment, for he grieves at the idea of his child's suffering; but he permits it because he knows that if the evil to which the child is prone increases, it will be the cause of his unhappiness both in this life and in eternity. In like manner, "as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."

The Lord permits punishments for a similar object —that man's evil may be subdued, and that he may be eternally happy. Thus it is written, "As many as I love I rebuke and *chasten*." (Rev. iii. 19.) Again, "For whom the Lord loveth, He *chasteneth*." (Heb. xii. 6.)

We have been thus led into the subject of punishments as being not only connected with the *Cross* as the instrument of punishment, but chiefly to show that punishments are in no way designed and appointed by God, and that He cannot arbitrarily punish the wicked, but that the wicked by their own sinful states and deeds bring punishment upon themselves. These remarks enable us to see how greatly those err who suppose that the sufferings endured by Jesus Christ were inflicted by the hand or will of God. In this, as in other cases, God *willed* the end, and *permitted* the means. The *end* was the redemption of mankind, and the glorification of the Redeemer's Humanity, that He might thus perpetuate redemption forever; and the *means* were the assaults from the "powers of darkness" and combats against them which the Lord, as the "Son of Man," had to endure and overcome during his whole life in the world; the last temptation and combat being that of the *cross*, by which the entire work of redemption and atonement was accomplished. He suffered, not to avert the vengeance of God, or to satisfy what is called "vindictive justice" in God, but to avert the vengeance of hell and to deliver mankind from the bondage of "unclean and evil spirits," of which we read so much in the Gospels.

He suffered, not to appease the wrath of a supposed angry God, but "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and *deliver* them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. ii. 14, 15.)

The *cross*, therefore, as involving the temptations, combats and victories by which redemption was accomplished, became the emblem of Christianity, which was called the "Religion of the Cross." These sufferings and temptations of the great Redeemer are also understood by the "blood of the cross," and likewise by the "blood which cleanses us from all sin." For by this *blood* is not only meant his sufferings, but also the Divine Truth which comes from Him in his glorified Humanity, and of which He speaks when He says that we must "drink his blood" (John vi. 54), else "we have no life in us." Moreover, another reason why the *cross* is the emblem of Christianity, is because the Lord so often said that "except a man take up his cross and follow Him, he cannot be his disciple."

It will now be evident that the Redeemer's sufferings are not to be considered in the sense of punishments that overtake the sinner as being inherent in his own evils, for "He was without sin." Neither, for the same reason, is his crucifixion to be viewed as that of a malefactor and the "accursed of God," as above explained. He who was innocence itself, and whose whole life was one of constant submission and obedience to the divine will, could not possibly, in any true sense, be "accursed." Nevertheless,

He was so regarded by the Jews, and through their wickedness He was, as the Apostle says, "made a curse for us." He, "the just for the unjust," unjustly suffered the punishment of the cross at a time when that penalty was *justly due* to the fallen church.

The Lord often adverted to his sufferings and crucifixion (Matt. xx. 18, 19; xvi. 22, 23; Luke xxiv. 26) as indispensable to his "entering into his glory." But these sufferings signified by the cross, were, as we have seen in a former letter, not *penal*, that is, not endured in the sense of punishment, as a vicarious substitute in the stead of man; but they were *purificatory*, that is, they were endured as the means of sanctifying or purifying the humanity He had assumed from the Virgin, for the purpose of redemption. In this manner it was that "He, as the Captain of our salvation, became *perfect* through sufferings" (Heb. ii. 10); and that "He learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Heb. v. 8). Thus his sufferings were the means of "abolishing the enmity in his flesh" (Eph. ii. 15), or of atoning or reconciling, first, "in himself" (Eph. ii. 15) the fallen human nature to the Divinity within Him, and thus of providing, through the glorification of his humanity, the infinite Medium of reconciling all to God and to one another in mutual love, "who come unto Him and obey Him as the Author of their salvation."

In order, then, that we may have a proper Scriptural view of the *cross of Christ*, and of the *Religion of the Cross*, we must not consider the passion of the

cross *only*, which the Lord suffered as the last most direful temptation, by which He finished the work of redemption; but we must extend our view to the whole life of Jesus Christ whilst in the world, because we shall find that, as He requires that "his disciple should *daily* bear his cross," so He as our divine pattern *daily* bore his cross, and *daily* suffered the temptations spiritually signified by the cross.

This view of the subject opens a new scene of awful sublimity and of overwhelming grandeur in the life of the Redeemer, to all those who have hitherto confined their views of the doctrine of the cross, to the time when the Lord was literally crucified. Such persons cannot but consider that the passion of the cross and the work of redemption were one and the same thing; or that the whole work of redemption consisted in suffering the passion of the cross *only*. But the truth is, that the Lord, from the manger to the cross, was engaged in acts of redemption finally completed at his crucifixion, when He said, "It is finished."

Seeing, then, the important signification of the cross as the emblem of redemption, because involving the temptations and the means by which it was accomplished, the Church of the New Jerusalem exclaims with the Apostle, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. vi. 14.) The cross of Christ here plainly signifies the religion of Christ, or Christianity. This is evident from its being contrasted in a previous verse with the *circumcision*, or the religion of the

Jews. For by the *cross*, or the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, "the world is crucified unto us;" that is, we have power to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, and thus be saved. Hence the Apostle again says, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us that are saved it is the power of God." (1 Cor. i. 18.) Because all the power for salvation was provided by our Saviour God, through the work of redemption and atonement. But this *power* is of no use to man, unless he applies it in faith and love for the purposes of salvation. Thus he must "bear his cross," and "*crucify* the flesh, with the affections or passions and lusts thereof." (Gal. v. 24.) In this application of the cross laid down by the Lord and his Apostle, it verily becomes to us "the power of God" for all the purposes of salvation. Hence we can have no faith, no love, no holiness, in short, no Christian virtue whatever, unless we have previously borne the cross, and have endured the temptations necessary for our purification and regeneration. The Lord consequently says, that "except we deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Him, we cannot be his disciples."

This is the doctrine of the cross as understood by the primitive Christians. But soon after that primitive age everything of vital godliness in Christianity became more and more external, until at length very few features of the holy religion of the cross, or of true Evangelical Christianity, could be seen. The doctrine of the cross became so greatly obscured, that the practical evangelical truths it involves were

almost lost sight of, until at length the cross was reduced to a mere external *badge* of the Christian religion; and in this degraded state it remained throughout the dark ages which immediately preceded the Reformation.

At this period the cross was brought prominently forward as the great means of salvation. The eyes of the Protestant world were directed to the cross on Calvary, and to a crucified Redeemer, as the very centre around which all the faithful should assemble. This was certainly raising the cross from the servile office of a mere badge, in some degree to its primitive dignity and significance. But the great error which gained so prodigious a power in most of the Protestant Churches was, "that faith alone in the merits of Christ, as having suffered on the cross the penalties of sin in man's stead, was all that is sufficient for the salvation of man." This doctrine was the great luminary of the Protestant Churches. But what were and what are still its effects? Luther himself, not many years after he and other Reformers had preached this doctrine, complained most bitterly that the lives of the Protestants in general were even more licentious and wicked than had been the case prior to the Reformation.* And how could it be otherwise, when all the practical part of Christianity was destroyed by the dogma, "that man is saved by faith alone in the merits of Christ," who,

* See Luther's letters to his friends on this subject. [See also Appendix by the Editor of the American edition of this work, at the end of this Letter, p. 140.]

it is said, had suffered as a vicarious sacrifice all the penalties of sin in man's stead; and that man had only to believe in this doctrine, and the merits and righteousness of Christ would be imputed to him, and his salvation would be secured? When this doctrine is properly considered, it will be found to be a pure invention of man, and quite opposed to the genuine truths of the Gospel, and to the manner in which the important doctrine of the cross was understood and preached by the Apostles, and received and practised by the primitive Christian Church. It entirely excludes the coöperation of man with the Lord, "in working out his salvation" (Phil. ii. 12), and closes his eyes against the necessity of "denying himself and of taking up his own cross daily," and, through the power of his Saviour God, combating against the corruptions of his depraved, fallen nature, by "crucifying his affections and lusts" as opposed to the purity of the Gospel, in the way we have above described.

We now come to a very important point in Christian doctrine, which is that of REPENTANCE. Of all the doctrines most clearly laid down in the Gospel, and most frequently repeated, *Repentance* is certainly that doctrine. But the doctrine of *Repentance* is almost excluded from the prevailing theology among Protestants; and among the Romanists it is perverted into the dogma of *penance*. Throughout the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England we look in vain for any mention of this doctrine. This doctrine was the first which John the Baptist preached. (Matt. iii. 2; Mark i. 4). It was the

first which the Lord preached. "Jesus began to preach and to say, *Repent*," etc. (Matt. iv. 17). He came "to call sinners to *repentance*" (Matt. ix. 13). The Apostles "went out and preached that men should repent" (Mark vi. 12). Jesus said "Except ye *repent*, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke xiii. 5). The Apostles in like manner preached everywhere *repentance* for the remission of sins. (Acts ii. 38, iii. 19, xvii. 30.) And to every church in the Apocalypse the Lord promises eternal life to those only who "repent and overcome." It is thus abundantly evident that "remission of sins" and eternal life are given solely on the condition of faith in the Lord, and of repentance, which consists in the shunning of evil because it is a sin against Him.

We now ask how it has come to pass that this most Evangelical doctrine does not appear in the prevailing theology but as a mere incidental thing, and not as a primary and essential doctrine of Christianity? Has it not been supplanted and put out of sight by something substituted in its stead by the traditions of men, which in this case, as in many others, "have rendered the Word of God of none effect"? What is this something which has thus concealed from men the necessity of doing, as a means of salvation, the work of repentance? Is it not the prevailing doctrine of justification by faith only, which has done all this incalculable evil to men's states, and closed their eyes against the necessity of shunning evil as sin against God, which is repentance, as the means of salvation?

It is most true that unless the Lord had accom-

plished Redemption and had effected the Atonement in the manner described in a previous letter, "no flesh could have been saved." This work, then, of Redemption and Atonement is the ground of repentance, because it is from this that man has from the Lord the power to do the work of repentance, and to overcome and remove evil. Thus one great object of redemption was to place man in a position in which he can freely refuse what is evil from hell, and choose what is good from God. To do this in our daily life, is to do the work of repentance, and thus become, as the term repentance in Greek signifies, *changed* as to the states and dispositions of our minds, and to have our evils and sins remitted and removed.

But the idea involved in a "vicarious substitute," which is the chief feature in the prevailing dogma of the Atonement, is that of excluding the truly Evangelical doctrine of Repentance from the work of salvation. Hence it is that this most practical doctrine of Christianity is rarely preached; nor do we find it, as said above, prominently mentioned in any of the articles of orthodoxy. But most certain it is, as believed in the Church of the New Jerusalem, that the daily duty of repentance is the first and last duty of man; because by this duty he prepares himself to receive from the Lord faith, love, holiness, in short, all the blessings of Redemption and Atonement, and every good which constitutes eternal life. For the Atonement, so wonderfully effected, can be of no possible use to a man who does not avail himself of its saving benefits by a

life of daily Repentance. But for further explanation we must refer the reader to Swedenborg's "True Christian Religion," especially to the chapter on Repentance, so deserving of his attention.

I am, etc., A. V.

Appendix by the American Editor.

[Few Christians of the present day know to what a fearful extent Martin Luther departed in his religious teachings from the simple and most explicit requirements of the Gospel of Christ, or how surely the dogma of *salvation by faith alone*, so much insisted on by him, tended to the destruction of all heavenly life in its recipients, consequently to the ruin or consummation of the Christian church. This was the leading doctrine of the great apostle of the Reformation (so called), and from him it has been received and incorporated into all the creeds and proclaimed from all the "evangelical" (?) pulpits of Protestant Christendom. That the reader may see what this "great Reformer" (?) taught and *strongly emphasized*, and be able therefore to judge for himself of the inevitable tendency and effect of such teaching for two or three hundred years, I add here a few brief extracts from Luther's own writings. Thus, in his answer to Erasmus, entitled *De Servo Arbitrio*, he says:

"The nature of the Christian *Faith* requires it [that is, the preaching of the doctrine of election]. Faith has to do with 'things not seen,' and this is one of the highest degrees of faith; steadfastly to believe that God is INFINITELY *merciful*,—though

He *saves* BUT FEW, and *condemns so many;* and that He is *strictly just*, though *of his own will He* MAKES *such numbers of mankind* NECESSARILY *liable to damnation.* Now these are some of the *unseen* things whereof faith is the evidence; whereas, was it in my power to *comprehend* them, or *clearly to make out* how God is both *inviolably just* and *infinitely merciful*, NOTWITHSTANDING the *display of wrath*, and *seeming inequality in his dispensations* respecting the reprobate, FAITH WOULD HAVE LITTLE OR NOTHING TO DO. But now, since these matters cannot be adequately comprehended by us in the present state of imperfection, there is room for the exercise of faith. The truths, therefore, respecting predestination in all its branches, should be taught and published. They, no less than the other *mysteries* of Christian doctrine, being *proper objects of faith* on the part of God's people." (*Translated in Haweis Church Hist., Vol. II., p.* 393.)

Again: speaking of the Ten Commandments and of Moses, he says:

"The Ten Commandments do not belong to us Christians, but only to the Jews: which is proved out of the text, speaking to them whom He brought out of Egypt, who were Jews, not Christians. We will not admit that any the least precept of Moses be imposed upon us. Therefore look that Moses with all his law be sent packing, *in malam rem*, — with a mischief,—and that thou be not moved with any terror of him, but hold him suspected for a heretic, cursed and damned, and worse than the pope or the devil." (*Works of Luther, Vol. I., folio* 147.)

"If adultery could be committed in faith, it would not be sin." *

* Si in fide fieri posset adulterium, peccatum non esset. (Lutheri opp. tom. I. Jenæ, 1556, p. 523.

"Be a sinner, and sin boldly: but believe and rejoice more boldly in Christ, who is the conqueror of sin, of death and the world: we must sin so long as we remain here. This life is not the habitation of justice; it is sufficient that we know, through the riches of the glory of God the lamb which taketh away the sin of the world, sin cannot pluck us away from him, although we *were to commit fornication or murder a thousand and a thousand times in a day.*"*

"A Christian cannot, if he will, lose his salvation by any multitude or magnitude of sins, unless he ceases to believe; for no sins can damn him, but unbelief alone. Everything else, provided his faith returns or stands fast in the Divine promise given in baptism, is absorbed in a moment by that faith." —(*Luther de Captivitate, Bab.*, ii. 264. *Comp. Dispu.*, i. 523.)

Now, are not the sentiments contained in these extracts from the writings of this great pillar of the Reformation, calculated to diminish, in the estimation of the members of the Protestant Churches, the necessity of keeping the divine commandments "*as the means of entering into life*"? Does he not here speak of *committing fornication and even of murder as scarcely of any account*, provided a man have what he calls faith, but which in reality can no more be the faith of the Gospel than darkness can be light.

* Esto peccator, et fortiter; sed fortius fide et gaude in Christo, qui victor est peccati, mortis et mundi: peccandum est, quamdiu hic simus. Vita hæc non est habitatio justitiæ. Sufficit quod agnovimus per divitias gloriæ Dei agnum, qui tollit peccatum mundi, ab hoc non avellet nos peccatum, *etiamsi millies, millies uno die fornicemur aut occidamus.*—Lutheri Epis. tom. II. Jenæ, 1556, p. 345.

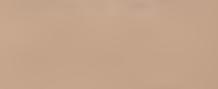
Into extravagancies and profanities so wild was Luther led by his doctrine of justification by faith alone, which he used frequently to call "*articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*"—that by which the Church must stand or fall. That there is no connection, as Swedenborg says, between such a faith as this and the keeping of the divine commandments, is abundantly obvious. There is nothing in this dogma to induce those who accept it as a fundamental, to shun evils as sins against God, or to live a holy and righteous life. Its obvious *practical* tendency is most pernicious. And Luther himself seems to have had some misgivings respecting its practical tendency; for he complained of the effects of such teaching, as well he might. He says respecting the life of the Protestants, a short time before his death,—

"We are the same as we formerly were, addicted to drunkenness and wantonness; and there nowhere appears to be so great an earnestness and zeal about the Gospel, as there once was amongst the monks and priests. The Gospel (such as we preach it) makes lazy, carnal Christians, who think that they ought not to do any good."*

And how could other fruits be expected from doctrines so anti-evangelical and abominable? Here we see one great reason why the eyes of men have,

* Wir sind dieselben, die wir vorher waren; dem Trunk ergeben, geil, und ist jetzt nirgends ein solcher Ernst beim Evangelium, wie man zuvor gesehen hat bei Mönchen und Pfaffen. Das Evangelium allein macht faule fressige Christen, die da meinen, sie durfen nichts gutes thuen.

to a great extent, been closed against the necessity of shunning evils as sins against God—especially the evils of falsehood, fraud, fornication and adultery, which have, in consequence, become so fearfully strong and prevalent throughout all Christendom. Had the Christian Church imitated the Great Teacher Himself, and taught as He did, "*repentance for the remission of sins*," instead of Luther's prominent doctrine of *faith alone*, as the primary and most essential doctrine of practical Christianity, we should not now have to deplore the existence of so many and great evils in the lives of those who are called Christians. The moral and spiritual condition of Christendom to-day, is precisely what might have been expected—the legitimate result of the false and anti-Christian doctrine of salvation by faith alone.—*Editor of the American Edition.*]



LETTER X.

DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION.

SIR:—Death and the Resurrection, as intimated in my last, shall be the subject of my present letter. Death is the most awful as well as the most important event in man's history. It is that which sums up all the acts of his past life, and which determines his lot to eternity. "He that is unjust [at the period of his death] will be unjust still; he that is filthy will be filthy still; he that is righteous will be righteous still; and he that is holy will be holy still." (Rev. xxii. 11.)

Solemn, awful words these, which ought to arouse even the most stubborn mind to reflection as to the infinite importance of a truly Christian life. No change as to man's governing love, or as to his real nature, can be effected after death. The day of probation is over; man's states are fixed. He of his own free choice and determination has formed his life either for good or for evil. And as he has formed it, so it remains. "As the tree falls, so it lies." A man loves the nature which during his life on earth he has contracted; and after death he is no more willing to part with it, or to change it, than a wolf or a viper is here willing to part with its nature, and to change it into that of a sheep or a lamb. The man who, whilst here, "delighted himself in the abominations of sin" (Isaiah lxvi. 3),

as in the sinful pleasures of fornication, revenge, malice, fraud, drunkenness, etc., will take with him his evil nature into the spiritual world—"will be filthy still,"—where the "pleasures of sin" will be changed, by the inevitable laws of that order which God has stamped upon the moral universe, into the miseries of hell. And this, not by the will, decree or predestination of God, for "God willeth not the death of a sinner, but that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved," but by the free choice and determination of the man himself.

Whereas, the good man or the true Christian who, during his life in the world, has, through a living faith in the Lord, and through the love of Him by keeping his precepts, formed his life for good, and who, through acts of justice, sincerity, charity, and kindness to his neighbor, has contracted a heavenly nature, will, after death, continue to delight in goodness, truth and holiness, and "be righteous and holy still;" and will, consequently, enter into that world called heaven, where nothing can approach "that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie."

There are three ideas of death presented to us in God's Word. *First*, there is the death of the body, or natural death. *Secondly*, there is the death of the soul "in trespasses and sins," or spiritual death, called also "the second death." And, *thirdly*, there is "the death unto sin" (Rom. vi. 2), to which the Apostle also alludes when he says, "I die daily."

We can have no true comprehensive knowledge of death unless we consider it in this three-fold light.

It is a common opinion that the death of the body, or, more properly, the separation of the spirit from the body, at the period we call death, is a consequence of sin. But this is a mistake. The death of the body is not a result of sin, or of the fall; but it is the consequence of a law and of a necessity of creation, in order that man as a spiritual and immortal being, may be separated from what is material, and may become an inhabitant of the spiritual world, his final destiny. Hence when a man dies he is said "to pay the debt of nature:" which means, that man is only undergoing that process and change called death, which the laws of nature or of creation require that he should undergo. Hence it is said, that "it is appointed unto all men once to die, and after death the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27), to show us that it is a divine appointment, and not a consequence of sin, that man should be separated from the material body, that he may become a spiritual being and an inhabitant of heaven. But although the dissolution of the body is not a consequence of sin, yet most true it is, that all disease and suffering generally attendant upon death, are from sin.

But the "death of the soul in trespasses and sins," or spiritual death, when a man is dead to the life of heaven, is what is properly understood in Scripture by the term *death*. A few passages will clearly prove this fact:—"This my son was *dead*, and is *alive* again." "He that believeth in me shall *never die*." Again: "To be carnally minded is *death*; to be spiritually minded is *life* and peace." From these and

many other passages of similar import, it is evident that *death*, as mentioned in the Scriptures, means chiefly spiritual death, or the death of the soul to the life of heaven, which life is *love* to God above all things, and love to the neighbor. Again: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely *die*." Adam did not die as to his body on the day he ate thereof, but he died as to the life of heaven in his soul.

When a man denies himself as to his selfish nature, or his "ungodly lusts," he is said "to *die* unto sin," and to "*live* unto righteousness." This death is said to be daily—"I die daily" (1 Cor. xv. 31)—because it is in this way that a man is regenerated day by day, and grows in grace and holiness. This death unto sin is also signified by "crucifying the flesh with the affections, or passions and lusts" (Gal. v. 24): and "by taking up our cross daily," that we may be disciples of the Lord, or true Christians.

Having now seen what *death* is, as understood in Scripture, we may easily see what *life* is, as meant by the same divine Authority. There is a *natural or physical life*, which a man has in common with animals; and there is a *spiritual life*, which he has, if regenerate, in common with angels, or with the "spirits of just men made perfect in heaven." If he is a true Christian, or is "spiritually minded," he has this life; but if he is not a true Christian, or is "carnally minded," he has not this life, but is *dead;* for "to be carnally minded is death." This spiritual idea of life and death pervades the Scrip-

tures, as your intelligent readers are well aware. In fact, this spiritual life or this spiritual death which continues forever, is the only life and death worthy of the Scriptures to contemplate. The life and death of the body, which so soon terminates and is forgotten, is scarcely considered as anything compared with the life or death of the soul, which never terminates. The life of the soul consists in the "love of the Lord above all things, and the love of our neighbor as ourselves." But the death of the soul is the love of evil, which is directly opposed to the love of God. For *life* as to its essential element is *love*.

Having thus briefly stated what the Church of the New Jerusalem teaches from the Word of God respecting *life* and *death*, I will now proceed to show what the New Church teaches respecting the *Resurrection*. But permit me first to say, that the above general statement admits as your intelligent readers will no doubt perceive —of ample confirmation from Scripture, which, for brevity's sake, I cannot here adduce.

As there is a two-fold *death* taught in the Scriptures, "a death of the soul in trespasses and sin," and a death of the body when separated from the soul, so there is a two-fold *resurrection* mentioned in the Word of God. Thus we read of the first resurrection—"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the *first* resurrection." (Rev. xx. 3.) This first resurrection is a resurrection from "the death of sin unto a life of righteousness." This is, indeed, a blessed resurrection! for it is the same as salva-

tion. And as this resurrection can only be effected by a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, hence it is that He calls himself "the *Resurrection* and the Life." It was the "saving power of this resurrection" that the Apostle prayed "he might know" (Phil. iii. 10), even while he was still living in the body (verse 11). For the first or primary resurrection from the death of sin to a life of righteousness, must take place here, otherwise there can be no blessedness after death. It is the first resurrection to which the Apostle alludes when he says, "If ye be *risen* with Christ, seek those things which are above." (Col. ii. 1, 2.)

It is important to dwell upon this resurrection; as people in general, when they think of this subject, think only of the resurrection of the body at some future day, called the general resurrection, which is a great mistake, as it is nowhere taught in Scripture. In consequence of this mistaken idea, they entirely lose out of sight the practical efficacy of the Scripture doctrine of the resurrection, which is: first, that we must rise from the death of selfishness and sin; and, secondly, that we rise at the death of the natural body, in the spiritual world, and are clothed with a spiritual body; "for," says the Apostle, "there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body."

The Lord teaches us about this resurrection in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, from which we learn the following facts:—1, That man rises immediately after death; 2, That he is in a human form or spiritual body; and 3, That according to his

state, determined by his life in the world, he goes either to heaven or to hell. This is the truly Evangelical doctrine concerning the resurrection of man from the dead, as it is taken from the mouth of the Lord himself, and cannot be gainsaid by anybody professing Christianity. The natural body is adapted to this natural world, and the spiritual body is adapted to the spiritual world in which man is to live forever.

It is nowhere taught in Scripture, as the celebrated Locke demonstrated to the Bishop of Worcester, that *dead bodies* will ever rise again; but the contrary is clearly maintained by the declaration that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The doctrine of a *spiritual body*, which is the spiritually organized form of man's soul or mind, is clearly taught in Scripture. It is this which rises immediately on the death of the natural body, and is in its own or spiritual world.

The common notion of the resurrection of the material body, at some future day (for according to this doctrine Adam and Eve have not yet risen from the dead), is founded upon a few passages of Scripture not understood; and is full of the most gloomy notions, and affords no incentive (on account of the supposed long unconscious state or sleep in which the soul is between death and the resurrection), to a life of holiness. Whereas, the doctrine of the Church of the New Jerusalem on this subject, is full of light and comfort to a thinking mind, and a great incentive to watchfulness and holiness of life. For when it is known that man rises in the spiritual or

eternal world immediately at death, as is clearly implied in the Lord's words to the thief on the cross —"To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise"— and that he continues to exist in a far more conscious state of feeling and thought and of every mental sensation, than he possibly could here whilst clogged with a material body—every inducement is held out to even a thoughtless mind to lead a life which shall fit him for holiness hereafter.

That the natural body is not necessary, as some erroneously suppose, to the perfection of man after death, is clearly implied in the declaration of the Apostle, "that the spirits of just men are made *perfect* in heaven." If already *perfect*, what need have they of the resurrection of the material body to make them *perfect?* As space does not permit me to enter further upon the Scriptural and rational demonstration of this doctrine of the New Church, I will advise your readers who wish to inquire more into it, to apply to W. White, 36 Bloomsbury Street, Oxford Street, London, and they will receive gratis, by post, a tract on the subject, which explains the Scripture passages which they may conceive are not in accordance with this idea. [Or, they may apply to E. H. Swinney, No. 20 Cooper Union, New York; or to the Swedenborg Publishing Association, 930 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pa.]

I am, dear Sir, yours right truly, A. V.

LETTER XI.

SPIRITUAL DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

SIR:—I am glad to find that a new opponent in C. D. has come forward. My letters on the "Atonement," on the "Justification of the sinner before God," and on the "True Doctrine of Salvation by the Cross of Christ," remain untouched by any opposing arguments. And your readers will find, the more they reflect upon them, that they are abundantly substantiated by Scripture, perfectly comprehensible and rational, and above all so evangelically practical as to lead straightway to salvation. No mysticism, no binding down of the understanding in obedience to a blind faith—the maxim of the theology of the dark ages—is tolerated in the light of the New Jerusalem.

Those who uphold fallacious and erroneous dogmas founded on appearances, and not on the dictates of *genuine truth*, are—whatever they may say to the contrary—directly opposed to that mental progress and enlightenment of which, in this age, we are so much inclined to boast. Is the human mind to improve in science, in political economy, and in everything relating to the bodily life? and are there to be no new ideas drawn from a superior interpretation of the Word of God, to enable it to improve in the spiritual and heavenly life? Heaven forbid! Men can only really improve as they make progress in the

knowledge of God's Word, and of spiritual and heavenly things. This is the real progress. This is the real enlightenment, for which we should pray, and after which we should aspire.

My new and learned opponent seems unwilling or unable to make a distinction between the death of the body, as an appointment of God by creation, and the death of the soul, so clearly distinguished in Scripture, as pointed out in my last letter. All his ideas are consequently in great confusion and obscurity. The day that Adam ate of the forbidden tree, he did not die as to the *body*, but as to the *soul*. Adam's body at creation, like all the things that God had made, including the reptiles, etc., was "very good;" but does it follow, as C. D. infers, that Adam's natural body would not, like every other thing, undergo a process called decay and death, in order that his immortal spirit might be freed from its tenement of clay, and enter upon its immortal existence in the spiritual world?

One great evil caused by an erroneous and sensual theology is, that it keeps the mind bound down to the life of the body, and does not elevate it to consider the life of the spirit. But the life of the spirit is the real life, which Scripture, when read with any degree of spiritual discernment, always contemplates. It is most true that disease and suffering came upon man's body, and that thorns and thistles and barrenness came upon the earth by the Fall. But this fact is forever to be distinguished from the separation of man's spirit from his body of clay at the period we call death. It was sin, and the con-

sequent influx of evil from hell, which caused all these miseries to the human race.

As my opponent confounds the natural death of the body with the spiritual death of the soul, so he confounds the ideas of the resurrection of man from the *death of sin* with the resurrection of the *spirit from the body*. These two ideas again are clearly distinguished by Scripture, but not so by the theology which commonly prevails. The arguments stated in my letter from the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus are passed by, or entirely ignored, by my opponent. But these arguments settle the question as to the resurrection of man from the dead, and prove that the doctrine of the New Church is, on this subject, based upon "the truth as it is in Jesus;" for Jesus spake this parable in order to teach us the truth on this important subject. But I am aware it is common in controversy to ignore arguments, or to pronounce them unintelligible, which cannot be refuted.

But C. D. imagines that he can prove the resurrection of *dead bodies* at some future period called the general resurrection, by certain passages of Scripture commonly employed for this purpose. I was fully aware of these passages, and I referred your readers to the tract, to be had gratis on application, by which those passages are explained. Permit me, however, first to state that the New Church believes not only in a *general*, but in a *universal* resurrection; that is, that every man rises on the death of his natural body, in a spiritual body, and that he is then in the spiritual world, like Lazarus and the

rich man, or like the thief on the cross, to whom the Lord said, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." These had risen, and they were in the spiritual world, but their natural bodies had not risen; consequently they were in their spiritual bodies, which, as said in my last letter, is the spiritually organized form of man's spirit or mind. "There is," says the Apostle, "a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." This passage ought, if it favored my opponent's idea, to read *not* that there is, but that there *will be* a spiritual body. But if my friend will look at the passage fairly, without having his mind biassed by a preconceived idea about a future general resurrection of *dead bodies*, he will see that it is in the present tense, "There is a spiritual body," which, as the soul, is within the natural body, and that it is this body which rises when the other dies. Compare this idea with the supposed resurrection of dead bodies at some unknown period in the future, and you will instantly see how full of practical wisdom the one is over the other; and at the same time you will behold how the Apostle, in chap. xv. of the Corinthians, corroborates and illustrates the doctrine of the New Church on the resurrection of man from the dead.

But what are the passages my opponent adduces to confirm this doctrine that the dead body will some day or other rise from the grave, and then be changed into a spiritual body? I beg your numerous readers calmly to consider with me the passages C. D. has adduced, in order that we may come to a right understanding of their divine meaning.

1. "All that are in the *graves* shall hear his voice and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation" (John v. 28, 29). In this passage we have to attend to three things, that it may be rightly understood:—1. Who are the dead? 2. What are the graves? 3. When shall they hear the voice of the Son of God?

First, The dead are not dead bodies, but *pantes oi* (masculine), that is, "dead in trespasses and sins;" or, like the Prodigal, *dead* as to the spiritual life, but not dead as to the body. The dead in this sense can hear the voice of the Son of God, because by the power of redeeming love from which the Lord here speaks, his voice could reach and affect all, and thus raise them from the death of sin, and also from the death of the body, because it is by the power of his resurrection that we are raised in both senses. But a dead, decomposed body, as a lump of clay, could not possibly hear. Surely my opponent will not for a moment maintain that a lump of clay, or a heap of dust, can hear the voice of the Son of God? If he maintain this position, I reply in his own language, "Strange infatuation! abominable error!"

Secondly, What are the graves? Let the Lord himself answer this question. He calls the Pharisees "whited sepulchres" (Matt. xxiii. 27), and says "they are as *graves* which appear not," etc. (Luke xi. 44). Here the Lord plainly teaches us that *graves* are unregenerate men, who are not only dead but *buried* "in trespasses and sins." The external form or body of man dead in sin, is, therefore, as a *grave;*

for a grave being full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness (Matt. xxiii. 27), is the proper emblem of such a state and of such a man. The "voice of the Son of God" being the Divine Truth from the Lord in his glorified Humanity, can reach all such and give them the means of salvation; but not to decomposed bodies in the grave.

Thirdly, When shall they hear? Not, as my opponent imagines, at some distant period called the general resurrection, but NOW; for in verse 25 it is expressly said "the hour is coming, and *now is*, when the dead (not dead bodies, but *necroi*, in the masculine) shall hear," etc. The dead were then hearing whilst the Saviour was speaking; and they now hear by the power of the Word, which can convince a sinner and awaken him from the death of sin. These words also show forth the Lord's resurrection power, that at death all will come forth out of the external earthly form, or body, which is as a grave, the good to the resurrection of life, and the evil to the resurrection of damnation.

My respected opponent who is not pledged to maintain error, will now, I think, see how superior in every way the New-Church doctrine is on the resurrection, to that of the common notion founded in ignorance and fallacy.

2. "And many of them that sleep in the *dust* of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Dan. xii. 2.) This passage teaches the same great truth as the one we have just considered. To sleep in *the dust* signifies to be in a low, sensual state of wicked-

ness, living only to the body and for the body, "fulfilling (as the Apostle says) the lusts of the flesh." To awake from this state, is to come forth unto everlasting life; but those who at the death of the body, are not regenerated, come forth to shame, etc. It is admitted that this passage does not refer to a general resurrection, because it is said "*many*," and not *all* that sleep, etc.

3. "Thy dead (men) shall live, together with my *dead body* shall they arise" (Isaiah xxiv. 19). A little consideration will put this passage in its right light. At verse 14 it is said, "They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they *shall not rise*." Now here in the same chapter the *dead* are said *not to rise*. This plainly shows that a general resurrection is not here treated of at all. But the text and context are clearly shown by Bishop Lowth to signify the deliverance of the Israelites, or the people of God represented by them, from a state of the lowest depression. But a more specific view of this passage teaches us that thereby is represented the resurrection of the people of God from a state of spiritual death to a state of spiritual life. "Thy dead shall live" denotes that those "dead in trespasses and sins" will be regenerated and live, or be saved. "Together with *my dead body* shall they arise," does not mean the material body, but the "body of sin" (Rom. vi. 6), or the "body of death" (Rom. vii. 24); also "the vile body" (Phil. iii. 21). For this body is the spiritual body of the sinful or unregenerated spirit, which, so long as it is in its unregenerate state, is a body "of sin," "of death,"

and "vile;" but when regenerate it rises to newness of life, and is "fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body." This passage, therefore, in Isaiah, yields, as Bishop Lowth, Locke and others have demonstrated, no countenance whatever to the notion of a resurrection of dead bodies.

The passage in Job does not in like manner refer to the resurrection of the dead body, but to a renewed state of health which Job subsequently enjoyed (chap. xlii. 5), and in which he saw, that is, acknowledged, his Redeemer. For the terms *worms* and *body*, printed in *italics*, are not in the Hebrew, and should not be in the version. Besides, Job says expressly, in opposition to the common notion that dead bodies will some time or other rise again from the grave, "He that goeth down to the grave shall come up *no more*." (Job vii. 9.)

My next letter will be on "Heaven and Hell," or the nature of the Life after Death.

I am, dear Sir, yours right truly,

A. V.

LETTER XII.

THE LIFE AFTER DEATH.

SIR:—As, after a careful perusal, I cannot discover in my opponent's last letter any argument against the positions from Scripture and reason on which the Church of the New Jerusalem bases its doctrine of the Resurrection, I must leave the subject to the calm consideration of your intelligent readers; entreating them not to allow the *prejudiced* cry of "Swedenborgianism" to deter them from examining the subject in the light of Scripture and rational truth. For the real question is, not whether the doctrine advanced be "Swedenborgianism," but whether, according to the first *postulate* agreed on between us at the commencement of this discussion, it be founded on Scripture and confirmed by its testimony.

Having in my two last letters presented to your numerous and intelligent readers a brief statement of the doctrine of the New Church on the important subject of Death and the Resurrection, I now proceed to speak on the nature of the Life after Death, and on Heaven and Hell. This, it must be admitted, is a most deeply interesting subject, and I doubt not that every serious reader will be concerned to know what the Church of the New Jerusalem has to say from Scripture and from rational considerations on

this solemn question. It is natural that a man in his right mind should earnestly desire to know something on which he can Scripturally and rationally repose as to the Life after Death; and therefore I am most happy to be permitted, through your liberality and kindness, to present to your readers the following doctrinal statement:—

1. The New Church teaches, from express declarations and inferences drawn directly from the Word of God, that man rises in the spiritual world immediately after the death of his material body. This is evident from the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, which the Lord spake in order to teach us about man's resurrection from the dead, and his subsequent state either of happiness or misery. That there is no long interval, as is commonly supposed, of nobody knows how many thousands of years, is evident from the fact that Lazarus immediately at death was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom, or heaven; and that the rich man, although "buried" as to his natural body, was, as to his spirit, in the spiritual world, and suffering the consequences of his evil life whilst in the natural world. That the resurrection which both experienced was a resurrection of the spirit, or of the "spiritual body," and not of the natural body, is abundantly evident. That no resurrection at some final day, as is commonly supposed, was contemplated in the divine mind of the Speaker, is equally obvious; for the Rich Man made an appeal in behalf of his brethren still living in the world. Again, the Lord said to the thief on the cross, "To-day

shalt thou be with me in Paradise," which plainly signifies that the thief would rise from the dead immediately on the extinction of his bodily life. In the Old Testament we read that the spirit of Samuel was seen, soon after his death, by Saul; and that Samuel declared to Saul that "on the morrow he and his sons should be with him" (1 Sam. xxviii. 19); we accordingly find, in a subsequent chapter, that Saul and his sons were slain, thus verifying Samuel's prediction.

This idea of man's immediate resurrection from the dead in the world of spirits, is most rational and most consoling, and at the same time has in its favor the common unsophisticated consent of all, when not allowing their thoughts to be governed by an erroneous doctrine. For what is more rational than the idea that man who is immortal, and created to live in the spiritual world forever, should, immediately on the extinction of his bodily life, enter upon his spiritual existence? On the contrary, what is more irrational than to suppose that man, created to live forever, should, at death, be plunged, as Dr. Whately, the Archbishop of Dublin, teaches in his sermons on "Death and the Resurrection," in an unconscious sleep, for, it may be, thousands and thousands of years, until the morning of the supposed general resurrection? or that the soul should be in some unknown region of the universe, enjoying no perfect existence until it is again re-united with its material tenement?

The former idea is not only a plain deduction of Scripture, but it is confirmed by numerous analogies

in creation, which, as "visible things," represent to us the "invisible things" of God's kingdom. (Rom. i. 20.) The "corn of wheat" no sooner dies in the ground, than it rises again (John xii. 24); the caterpillar no sooner dies as to its *larva* state, than it rises in its *butterfly* state, and enjoys a very superior existence, analogous to man's earthly state, his death and his resurrection; and if he be regenerate, to his heavenly state also. The death, so to speak, of the day is its *midnight*, and the death of the year is its *midwinter;* but no sooner does this death arrive than a new day and a new year commence. Whereas, the idea of an unconscious sleep, has no analogies in nature to confirm and illustrate it. The Apostle clearly teaches this same idea which the doctrine of the Church of the New Jerusalem maintains, when he says, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle [the earthly body] were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands [the spiritual body], eternal in the heavens," etc. (2 Cor. v. 1, 2.) Besides, the Apostle says, "For me to die is gain." (Phil. i. 21.) What gain would there be in an unconscious sleep? But there is every *gain* in the idea of the resurrection which the doctrine of the New Church teaches.

2. The New Church teaches that man not only rises immediately at death, but that he rises in a perfect human form, which is a spiritual body; "for," says the Apostle, "there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." This spiritual body is the organized form of man's spirit, which consists of spiritual substances, which are quite distinct from

material substances, of which his earthly body consists. These substances are not subject to the laws and conditions of the material world, but to the laws and conditions of the spiritual world, and are indestructible and immortal. "There are," says the Apostle, "bodies terrestrial and bodies celestial;" and "the glory of the terrestrial is one, and the glory of the celestial is another," etc. It is a mere fallacy to suppose that man is a man by virtue of his natural body; he is a man by virtue of his rational mind or spirit, the form of which is essentially human. When a man dies he quits his earthly covering, which he wants no more, because not adapted to his new state of existence. Thus we read of Moses and Elias seen with the Lord at his transfiguration, as being "two men." Angels were always seen in the Word of God as men, and described as such. Man, therefore, at his resurrection immediately after death, is in a perfect human form, in the enjoyment of every sense, especially of the senses of sight and hearing, in a far more exquisite degree than when encumbered with a body of clay. And this, because the proper seat of all sensation is not the earthly body, but the spirit; for when the spirit quits the body, this latter has no sensation whatever.

3. Man's state after death is determined by his previous life in the world. "He that is righteous and holy will be righteous and holy still; and he that is filthy and unjust will be filthy and unjust still" (Rev. xxii. 11)—as explained in a former letter. According as a man lives he induces an organization in the spiritual substances of his soul

or spirit, which is in agreement with his nature, or with the governing love or principle of his life. If his life has been a truly Christian life, he has contracted a nature and organized his spirit for good, and he goes among the good in heaven; but if his life be evil, he has contracted a nature and has organized his spirit for evil, and he becomes the hideous form of his own evil, and can only associate with those who are confirmed in evil—that is, with those who are in hell.

Although heaven is open to all, none on the part of God being excluded, for He wishes all to come unto Him in heaven; but the evil "hate the light of heaven, and will not come into it because their deeds are evil;" they consequently shun, of their own accord, the heavenly world—as they have not a nature which can sustain the life of love, holiness and happiness of heaven—and betake themselves to the abodes of darkness. It is of great importance to see that man's soul or spirit is an organized form, receptive, according as he lives, either of goodness from God, or of evil from hell; and according as he has lived up to the period of his death, so he remains. "Know ye not," says the Apostle, "that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. vi. 16.) Forgiveness of sins on the part of God, and actual salvation, are two very different things. God always forgives, as forgiveness and reconciliation are the essential attributes of his divine mercy. But in order to salvation, man must

be in a state to receive the divine forgiveness. So long as he loves evil and lives in it, he cannot possibly receive God's forgiveness; but immediately he begins to shun evil because it is sinful against God, or when he begins to keep God's commandments, he then receives God's forgiveness and mercy, and is saved. This is essential to be known, because many think that they can be admitted into heaven through immediate mercy and divine forgiveness, without having previously kept God's commandments in their daily life, or having constantly shunned evil in thought and deed as a sin against Him.

4. The doctrine of the New Church teaches that heaven is very near to man, yea, within him, if in a state of regeneration. "Verily I say unto you, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke xvii. 21). Heaven, therefore, consists chiefly in states of mind —in states of love to God and to the neighbor. And after death man comes into heaven amongst angels, "or the spirits of just men made perfect," just in the degree in which heaven was, through regeneration, formed within him whilst on earth. Whereas if heaven is not within a man, hell must necessarily take its place, since a man cannot spiritually "serve two masters." Hell is thus not only very near an evil man, but is actually within him, so long as he does not repent and turn away from the evil which he loves and practises. In the Gospel we read of "evil and unclean spirits," at the time when the Lord was in the world, being so near to men as to take possession of them; and if the Lord had not come and accomplished redemption, they would soon

have destroyed mankind. It is of immense importance that a man should have a right Scriptural idea of heaven and hell, since his mind is thus prepared to receive the one and to reject the other. He rejects hell, together with all "evil and unclean spirits," when he rejects evil as suggested to his mind, and especially when he resists it by fighting against it and overcoming it. This, however, he cannot do of himself, but through faith in the Lord, who gives us the power "to overcome even as He overcame." For "without Him we can do nothing;" but with Him "who strengthens us," we can do all things that He requires us to do for our salvation. This fight against evil is the "good fight of faith" of which the Apostle speaks. The truth thus vigorously applied to the life, cleanses us from all sin. This truth, as it comes from Him who only is the Truth, is called in Scripture, amongst other appellations, the "blood of Christ which cleanses us from all sin." It is of no use for us to imagine that we have any saving faith, or love, or holiness within us, unless we have kept the Lord's precepts, or shunned evil as sinful against Him. "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

I intended to speak to your readers about "the *fire* which is not quenched and the *worm* that dieth not," and also respecting other particulars about heaven; but my space, I find, is nearly filled up, as I intend, according to your kind suggestion, to be more brief in my statements. Permit me, however, to state, that by the "fire of hell," as mentioned in Scripture, is not meant material fire, such as we

have in our furnaces on earth, but spiritual fire, which in hell consists of evil loves of every kind, as hatred, revenge, malice, etc., which, according to the law of correspondence by which that world is governed, are manifested in external objects and phenomena corresponding to the evil states of the spirits to which they relate. Thus, when hatred, revenge, envy, etc., are excited into activity, there appear fires of various kinds, and the individuals concerned, like the rich man in the parable, appear to be burning in the flames. We say in common language, that a man *burns*, when in a passion, with anger and fury; but we do not mean that he burns with material fire, but with mental or spiritual fire. The lusts of these evil loves are the fires which are not quenched; and the "worm that dieth not" is the false principle which is in connection with the evil love. In a good sense *fire* signifies pure love, such as it is in heaven; but in a bad sense, evil love, such as it is in hell. But more will be said on the subject of heaven and hell in another letter.*

I am yours right truly,

A. V.

[* For a full and interesting account of Heaven, its inhabitants and their character, its social arrangements, its habitations and scenery, its government and laws, its employments and its joys, and numerous other things which Christians (and many who are not Christians) desire to know something about, the reader is referred to Vol. II. of the Swedenborg Library, entitled "Heaven." And for a rational, intelligible and Scriptural account of Hell, he is referred to Barrett's "New View of Hell." Both works published by E. Claxton & Co., Philadelphia.]

LETTER XIII.

SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT MAN'S SPIRIT, AND SPIRITUAL SUBSTANCE, ANSWERED.

SIR :—I have read the last letter of C. D., and also that of his friend "Amicus." As the letter of "Amicus" contains not a single grain of argument, either from Scripture or reason, against any of my positions, I cannot be expected to reply to his vituperative assertions. This would neither promote the cause of Scriptural truth nor of Christian love. I must, however, express my surprise that you should allow me to be called a "Jesuit," and to be assailed with invectives which can only injure the cause of my opponent. "When reviled, revile not again," is a fixed principle of conduct in the true Church of Christ, or in the Church of the New Jerusalem ; and on this principle I shall, through the Lord's mercy, conduct this discussion to the end.

My opponent, C. D., still clings to the dead body of clay, as though it were the man himself. He admits that the spirit is the very man, and that at death, like Lazarus and Dives, he is in a spiritual body suited to his new state of existence. But he still maintains that the dead body will rise again, although, as demonstrated by Locke and others, no such resurrection of dead bodies is mentioned anywhere in Scripture. Why, then, does he still cling

to this unscriptural idea? Because it is in the popular theology, and to deny it would be to risk popularity. But what is popularity compared with the Truth itself? It is a mere bubble. Many things in religion have been popular in one age which have been rejected in another. What is "the praise of men" compared with the "glory of God"? Is the dogma of predestination, as expressed in the formula of Calvin, "*aliis vita æterna, aliis damnatio prædordinatur*," that is, "to some eternal life is pre-ordained, to others damnation"—is this dogma, once so popular and so orthodox, any longer so popular? The same fate will erelong attend every other erroneous dogma, even that under consideration, the resurrection of a dead body.

For let it be well observed, that the resurrection of man from the dead and the resurrection of a dead body are two very different things. "The spirits of just men," the Apostle says, are already made "*perfect* in heaven;" what need, then, have they of the earthly body to render them perfect? Was not the angel who spoke with John (Rev. xxii. 8, 9), one of the prophets who had risen from the dead? What would that angel, who on earth had been a prophet, have said, had John asked him whether he was not waiting to be clothed again with his dead body, at the period of the supposed general resurrection? He would have said, "Thou dost err, not knowing the Scripture, nor the power of God." "I am now in my spiritual body, and I require the dead body left in the earth no more; it is not suited to my heavenly state; I shall never resume it; I am,

as Paul says, *perfect* without it." That Lazarus (in John xi.) was raised by the Lord, is no argument in favor of a supposed general resurrection; for he died again.

But C. D. thinks that reason or logic has nothing to do with a plain declaration of Scripture. "It is," says he, "a pure matter of faith." But he should know that what the Word of God teaches is supremely rational and logical. The stronghold of bigotry is the antagonism which priestcraft raises between faith and reason. Let a man once listen to this, and he is on his way to the darkness of Popery, and every species of idolatry; even that of relics and of dead men's bones, can be crammed down his throat.

I will now address myself to the questions which C. D. proposes for my consideration.

1. Of what shape is the organized form of man's spirit?

Answer—perfectly human. The human form, as demonstrated in my former letters, is the form, not only of man's earthly body, but of his spirit also. Hence Moses and Elias at the transfiguration were seen in the human form as "two men." The angel who spoke with John (Rev. xxii. 9), and who had been a prophet, was in the human shape or form. The spirit of Samuel was seen in the human shape (1 Sam. xxviii. 14), and all angels seen in Scripture are described as men. Reason also shows that the human form is the perfection of forms, since in itself it is the form of love and wisdom, or a man. For love and wisdom, or goodness and truth, or charity and faith, do not exist as mere abstractions,

but in forms, which are angels and regenerate men. The only source of these divine principles is the Lord himself from whom they come; and they are received by us from Him, in the degree that we believe in Him and love Him by keeping his precepts.

2. My opponent asks, "Is this organization one individual whole? and if so, how can it be called an organization, or of many parts?"

This organization is not "one individual whole," understood in the sense of numerically or simply one thing. But like the human body which is *one*, yet consisting of innumerable parts so organized and arranged as to constitute a harmonious *one*. The human mind in like manner is not simply *one*, but it consists of innumerable faculties, so organized and arranged as by their harmonious action to constitute a *one*. For the Scriptural and also the philosophical idea of a one, or a whole, is not that of simply or numerically one, but of a one or whole consisting of many parts and particles. Thus "one fold," of which the Lord is the Shepherd, involves the idea of innumerable members so arranged and so actuated by one principle of love to Him, as to constitute a perfect harmonious whole. When the Lord said, "*One* thing thou lackest," He did not, as is evident from his subsequent words, mean one thing only, but all the perfections and graces necessary to form the truly Christian life.

3. "What are the properties of a spiritual substance?"

The properties of a spiritual substance are not to be thought of or derived from material substances,

but from the essential idea of substance in its origin, which is God. For that God is a substance or a *hypostasis* (Heb. i. 3), is declared both by the Apostle and by the common orthodoxy as expressed in the Athanasian Creed. It is evident to a mind of any elevated thought, that no material property or attribute can be predicated of God. He is infinitely above such properties, although He fills them with his life and directs them in their usefulness by his wisdom. Now, abstractly from matter, *Goodness* from God is the essential *substance* of all things which are according to the order of God, and *Truth* is the *Form* of that substance. That God created all things from Love or from essential Goodness, as from a principle or end, cannot be denied. Hence, everything that He created was, before the Fall, "very good." "The Word by which all things were created," involves and confirms what is here said. (John i. 1–4.)

Do not, I beseech you, think of the Word or the Divine Truth as *vox et preterea nihil*, but think of it as of the most Substantial Thing in the universe. For that which *creates* must be more substantial than that which is *created*. The properties, therefore, of what is *Good* and *True*, are the properties of a spiritual substance. Thus, all the attributes which we ascribe to *Goodness*, we may ascribe to a spiritual substance. Hence, mercy, charity, faith, justice, kindness, chastity, etc., are the properties of a spiritual substance, or what amounts to the same thing, of man's spirit; for these are by no means the properties of his body, which is a material substance. It is a great fallacy to suppose that they

are the properties of his body. They belong essentially to his mind, which, as C. D. admits, is not material, but spiritual; consequently they are the properties of a spiritual substance. If a spiritual substance be contrary to God's order, that is, if it be evil, as in hell with devils, and on earth with unregenerate men, the properties we then ascribe to them are what is evil and false, instead of what is good and true.

4. "What are the laws and conditions of spiritual substances?"

The laws of spiritual substance are the laws of the human mind and of its operations. For the mind, as before said, is a spiritual substance. If, then, we know by what law we exercise volition and thought, we know the essential laws of spiritual substances. That we exercise volition and thought from the influx and operation of life into us from God, cannot be denied by a Christian. For "in Him we live and move and have our being." Then, the first law of spiritual substances is, that they are actuated by a life and power superior to themselves. Material substances are also actuated by life from God, but in a lower degree; as the body which is man's material world, is actuated by life from his spirit.

A second law of spiritual substances is, that they are actuated according to the nature of their forms. If these are in order, that is, if they are in harmony with the spirit of life operating into them from God, *good* in every form, as justice, humanity, holiness, etc., is the result. But if these forms are perverse, which is the case when a man does not obey the precepts of God, but lives an evil life, then every kind of evil to which the man may be prone, is the

result. These are some of the laws of spiritual substances; the state in which they are, is understood by their condition. These laws are also the laws of essential freedom, by which a man determines himself either for good or for evil, "life or death, the blessing or the curse." (Deut. xxviii.) But my space forbids me to enlarge.

5. "Has the spiritual body organs of sense? and if so, how can the spiritual be sensible at one and the same time?"

Certainly, the organs of sense are the organs of life; and as the spiritual body, or the spiritual form of the soul, is the seat of life in man, it follows that it has organs of sense, of which the organs of sense in the material body are merely corporeal instruments, by which the spirit is capable of receiving external impressions, and of holding communication with worldly things. My friend C. D. well knows that all sensation, whether it be that of sight, hearing, smell, taste or touch, belongs properly to the spirit of man, and not to his body, except by derivation from his spirit. Thus, when the body dies, it has no sensation whatever. The organs of sense, therefore, by which sensation is experienced, belong properly to the spirit and not to the body. The spirit has, consequently, when separated from the body, organs of sense far more exquisite than when clothed with the earthly body. This is also proved by Scripture, from which it is clear that organs of sense are ascribed to Moses and Elias (Matt. xvii. 3), to the spirit of Samuel (1 Sam. xxviii. 14), and to others who had been men upon earth.

I am yours right truly, A. V.

LETTER XIV.

FUTURE REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS EXPLAINED.

SIR:—The subject of Future Rewards and Punishments is considered by every reflecting mind as of immense importance. For if properly understood, this subject will have great practical influence on our life and conduct in this our probationary state. "Whatsoever," says the Apostle, "we sow *here*, we shall reap *hereafter;* if we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption; but if we sow to the spirit, we shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." That is, if we live in the love of self and of the world, which is "to live to the flesh," we shall hereafter come into states of misery and despair, which is hell; but if we live here in the love of the Lord and of our neighbor, which is "to live after the spirit," we shall hereafter reap life everlasting and come into heaven. Here the punishment of an evil life and the reward of a good life, are plainly set before us. Nothing can be more simple. The Apostle also plainly shows us what it is to "sow to the flesh,"—it is to live "in adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you

before, as I have told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." He shows us also plainly what it is "to sow to the spirit,"—it is to live in love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, etc. (Gal. v. 19–23.) Here, then, the definition is clearly stated. There can be no doubt what is meant by "sowing to the flesh," and also by "sowing to the spirit." To live in the internal or "inward man, which rejoices in the law of God" (Rom. vii. 22), is to "walk in the spirit;" but to live in the external man only, is "to fulfil the lusts of the flesh," the end of which is corruption and spiritual death.

But in order to present the subject of future rewards and punishments in a rational as well as in a Scriptural light, it will be necessary to proceed in a certain order, and to arrange our remarks under certain heads, which we shall separately discuss and elucidate.

And *first*, in order to see this subject in its true light, we must begin with proper views of the Deity, and his design in creating man.

It will at once be admitted that the Divine Nature is infinite Love, Wisdom, and Power. For our "Saviour God is Love," and "He is Light," and "He hath all power in heaven and on earth."

Secondly.—It will be granted that the Divine Nature is unchangeable; "He changeth not," and "there is no shadow of turning in Him."

Thirdly.—It will also be granted that the laws of

his Providence by which He acts, are, like his Divine Nature, unchangeable.

Fourthly.—It will appear to the reflecting mind that the *end* for which God has created man is, that he may be "a partaker of his Divine Nature" (2 Peter i. 4), become an angel, and be happy in heaven forever. This is evident from the nature of his Divine Love, which cannot possibly contemplate any other end; and from the nature of his Divine Wisdom and Power, which can only direct all his operations to the accomplishment of that end.

These propositions are so Scriptural and rational that they bear with them the evidence of their own Truth, and can scarcely be disputed by any Christian man.

The nature of rewards and punishments in this life is well known. Man, as a subject of civil society, is rewarded, if he is a good citizen, with protection, respect and honor. He is thus rewarded in proportion as he lives according to the laws of civil order established in his country. And in proportion as he becomes useful to his fellow-citizens, he is further rewarded with rank, dignity, eminence and opulence. But if he violates these laws he is punished either with imprisonment, disgrace, fines and banishment, or with death. The laws of civil order are, if wise and just, founded upon the Divine Commandments.

Again, as a subject of moral society, a man is honored, beloved, and thus rewarded, in the degree that he fulfils the conditions of moral order, and acts according to its requirements. These conditions and requirements have relation to what is honorable

(*honestum*) in the internal, and to what is decorous (*decorum*) in the external. These two conditions of moral order cannot be separated with impunity. A man may have what is honorable—the *honestum*—in his intentions; but if he has not at the same time the *decorous*—*decorum*—in his external manners and deportment, he is not a perfectly moral man, and he is treated accordingly. All the laws of moral order are also founded upon the Divine Commandments. Otherwise they have no life and spirit within them from God, and are a mere external semblance of life without any spiritual and vital principle. Hence it is only the true Christian who is at the same time the true citizen and the truly moral and spiritual man.

The rewards of the moral man are chiefly the esteem, honor, confidence, and love of his fellow-men, and especially of the community in which he moves, and in which his uses are enjoyed. If he violates the requirements of moral order, all which are not only founded on the Divine precepts, but sanctioned by pure reason, he ceases to be a member of moral society, and is punished in various ways by losing the esteem and confidence of the society in which he lives, and also by the penalties mentioned above.

Thus there are rewards and also punishments attending the civil and moral life of man in the world. If he does well, he is rewarded in innumerable ways; if he does ill, he brings punishment in various forms upon himself. Again, a man is governed by physical laws as to the health, comfort and enjoyment

of his bodily life. If he obeys these laws he is, as a general rule, vigorous, strong, and in the enjoyment of health and of comfort. But if he neglects or violates them, he becomes weak, sickly, diseased and miserable. Thus the appetite for food and drink is regulated by certain laws, the observance of which is *temperance*, and ensures to us, under the Lord's Providence, the enjoyment of health and the true pleasures of bodily life. But if man violates these laws, *intemperance* ensues, which is the fruitful source of all diseases, and of bodily distress and misery.

Now, in these cases the laws of civil and of moral order as to their essential principles, and the laws of physical order relating to bodily health, are, like their Divine Author, unchangeable. the rewards or blessings of which follow the due observance of these laws, as light follows the rising of the sun ; and miseries, as the results of their non-observance or of their violation, ensue as naturally as darkness ensues on the setting of the luminary of day. By the observance of them man is rewarded with every good suited to his state ; but by the violation of them he is requited with evil in various forms, as punishments of his imprudent and wicked conduct. That is, he brings evil and its consequent miseries upon himself.

Man is evidently *free* either to observe these laws or to break them. Thus, as to the health of his body, it may also be said that "life and death, the blessing and the curse," are placed before him, and all the laws of order, as well as the results of expe-

rience and the suffrages of his own reason and common sense, exhort him with powerful voice to obey them. He knows the consequences of disobedience; but unhappily, led by voluptuous pleasure, or as the Apostle expresses it, "fulfilling the lusts of the flesh," he violates those laws of health and suffers the consequence. This is his punishment.

Now what *health* is to the body, and the laws of physical order by which it is preserved and enjoyed, *salvation* is to the soul, and the laws by which it is also secured, preserved and enjoyed. There is a perfect correspondence between the health of the body and the salvation or health of the soul; for the term salvation in its root signifies *health*. But all the laws of spiritual health and salvation are revealed to us in the Word of God. But for this Revelation man could know nothing certain about the laws of spiritual health or the salvation of his soul. Yea, he would not know that the soul is immortal; he would not be able to distinguish it from the life of the body. He would think, as many do even now, that when the body dies it is all over with man, or, that he will have no conscious existence until a supposed future resurrection of dead bodies, nowhere taught in Scripture. Still less would he know anything truly of God. In so great darkness would man be without a Revelation from God. To this Revelation we owe all the knowledge we possess, not only concerning God and the human soul, but all the essential laws and principles of civil and of moral order are from the same source. In short, man could not exist as a man without a Revelation

from God such as we have in the Word. All the ideas which Socrates, Plato and Aristotle had respecting God and the human soul, and all the confused notions which Cicero and Seneca possessed respecting the *natura deorum* and the *anima*, were all originally from Revelation. Their ideas were not excogitated by themselves, but were the remnants of a prior revelation brought from Egypt, Phœnicia and Syria.

The precepts and truths of the Word are consequently the laws of spiritual health, or of the salvation of the soul. If we keep these laws because they are God's laws, we shall assuredly enjoy here and in eternity "the saving *health* of God" (Psalm lxvii. 2), and our "*health* will spring forth speedily" (Isaiah lviii. 8). Here, as in other passages, God's Word employs the *health* of the body to signify, as said above, by correspondence between what is spiritual and natural, the *health* or salvation of the soul.

All these divine precepts and truths, like their Divine Author, are unchangeable. They promise blessing and happiness to those who obey them, and suffering and misery to those who disobey. Thus the Lord says, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isaiah i. 19, 20). And this is the universal testimony of Scripture. "Jesus," says the Apostle, "is the author of eternal salvation to them that *obey* him" (Heb. v. 9). "*Obedience* is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam. xv. 22). Again: "Our souls are purified by *obeying*

the Truth" (1 Pet. i. 32). Hence it abundantly appears that the rewards and punishments affecting the soul, like those affecting the bodily life, do not spring from any arbitrary appointment on the part of God, or from any decree preordaining or predestinating some to happiness and others to misery; or, as Calvin has expressed it in his "Institutes of Theology," "*aliis vita æterna aliis damnatio præordinatur*"—which being interpreted, means that "to some eternal life, to others damnation is foreordained." Awful, dreadful words! which not only make God the author of evil and of misery, but deprive the mind of all intelligence as to God's dealings with mankind, and especially as to the true nature of future rewards and punishments. Next to the almost inconceivable fact that such a position should have been maintained by any human mind, even in the darkness of heathenism, is the fact that entire churches, such as the Church of Scotland, should have believed it, and adopted it from the synod of Dort, as one of the luminaries of Christian theology. It is true that the human mind at the present time has, to a great extent at least, grown out of this most impious and revolting doctrine; nevertheless, it is still inwoven in Calvinistic theology, and prevents the mind from coming into the real knowledge of the nature of future rewards and punishments.

Nothing, then, can be more evident than that all God's operations, both in the preservation of the physical and in the salvation of the moral and spiritual universe, are conducted according to fixed and

immutable laws, which are as unchangeable as Himself.

All good which we receive from God, who is the only fountain of Good, has within it its own reward. As fire has within it its own heat and warmth, as light has within it its own evidence, or as honey its own sweetness, so has good from God its own peace, bliss and happiness within it. They cannot be separated. In like manner, all evil from hell which has arisen from the violation of God's laws, as revealed in his Word, has within it its own punishment—its own pain and misery. When, therefore, we receive good from God by a life of faith in Him and love to Him, we receive at the same time the reward which ever accompanies his goodness. But this goodness is treasured up in the "inward man which rejoices in the law of God" (Rom. vii. 22), and does not here come forth to the full perception and enjoyment of our external man. Cumbered necessarily whilst in this life with many earthly cares, and with many bodily ailments and infirmities, the peace and bliss which is in the goodness we receive from God, does not come out fully to our perception and enjoyment. All that can be experienced whilst here, even in our best states, is a serenity, contentment, resignation and peace of mind, which is full of trust and confidence in the Lord, that He in his mercy is ordering all things for our eternal good. The very cares, anxieties, ailments and infirmities to which we are liable in this life, are made, as a means of spiritual training, by unerring wisdom, subservient to our eternal happiness. They serve, "as the harrow

breaks up the clods" (Hosea x. 11), to break up our selfish and worldly love in various ways, to produce a deeper sense of humiliation, and of our own helplessness and need of divine mercy and assistance. They also serve to awaken within us sympathy and love for our fellow-men, and thus to promote the life of genuine charity, or a pure love of the neighbor.

But after death, when the internal comes forth into the external—when the clog of mortality, the "muddy vesture of decay," and "all sighing and sorrow" experienced in temptations, shall have passed away, the light and love in the internal "shall break forth as the morning," and the entire man, both as to his internal and his external principles, will be full of peace and heavenly happiness.

Whereas evil and its pleasures, called the "pleasures of sin," are indulged in this life as agreeable to the unregenerate, external mind, which does not, during its indulgence, feel the "sting of death" which is within it; this venomous sting, however, which is also often experienced in this life, comes out after death, and proves a source of misery in one form or another corresponding to its nature. The sweet with which the poison is covered is agreeable to the taste, but it soon begins to do its deadly work.

Thus it is an eternal law of divine order, that as good has within it its own reward, so evil has within it its own misery and punishment. The bringing forth of the internals into the externals after death, or the opening and disclosure of the *internals*, and the manifestation of them in the *externals*, is also in-

volved in what the Lord says in John v. 29:—"They that have done good [or who have good in the internal] shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil [or who have evil in the internal], unto the resurrection of damnation;" because the disclosure of the *internals*, and the manifestation of them in the *externals*, is also a kind of resurrection. For the term *anastasis*, here translated *resurrection*, involves the idea of standing up, or standing out, and implies the manifestation of what is internal or hidden in what is external or manifest.

Now if a man here so lives as, by indulging the pleasures of sin, to contract an evil nature, he, when he leaves this world, takes his evil nature with him; and as he did not here desire to change that nature by employing the proper means for the purpose, which are faith and repentance, his nature remains in the spiritual world not only unchanged, but, as to its ruling principle, unchangeable, according to that divine declaration which says, "He that is unjust let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous let him be righteous still; and he that is holy let him be holy still." (Rev. xxii. 11.) Again, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." (Jer. xiii. 23.) Again, "The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." (Ezek. xviii. 20.)

Thus man, by taking with him at death his own nature, either for good or for evil contracted during

his life in the world, continues, according to the immutable laws of God's unchangeable order, to love and delight in that nature, whether good or evil, which he has from his free choice and determination contracted and made his own. Nor is he willing to part with it or to change it. If he leave the world with a nature corresponding to the sheep or the lamb, which is an innocent and benevolent nature, he is unwilling to change it, but will continue to delight in it with ever-increasing pleasure to eternity. But if he leave the world with a nature corresponding to the wolf or the viper, he will also love the nature he has chosen and formed, and will be no more willing to part with it than a wolf or a viper upon earth is willing to change its nature. Thus the evil man takes with him his evil nature, and endeavors to gratify the evil delights of this nature. Hence the thief still loves to defraud, rob, and plunder; the revengeful still love to cherish feelings of revenge and malignity; the deceitful still love to cherish deceit and cunning; the licentious still love licentiousness; the slanderer still loves to backbite his neighbor; the envious still love to see their neighbor injured and in distress; the lover of Mammon still clings to his god; the idler still loves his idleness, and the despiser of God still loves to blaspheme his holy name.

Death produces no change in the nature; but by freeing it from material trammels and from earthly conditions, it gives it freer scope for the exercise of all its promptings, activities, and passions. But these promptings, passions, and activities of an evil

nature must be checked and kept in subjection. Here is the point when the pleasures of sin are changed into the miseries of hell. For hell is nothing but evil desires and passions ungratified, restrained, and subdued,—contrary to the will and nature of the unhappy subject in whom they exist. The lusts of evil now become the fire—not material but spiritual—"which cannot be quenched;" and the false principle connected with those evil lusts is "the worm which dieth not."

All evil is subdued by the punishment inherent in its nature. The evil designed falls back upon him who designed it. "His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate." (Psalm vii. 16.) The law of action and reaction is instantaneous in the spiritual world. And by this law it is that evil as it becomes active is instantly subdued. Thus the old law of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe" (Exod. xxi. 24, 25), is the law of retaliation, or of action and reaction, by which evil is subdued, and which in the spiritual world is, as said above, instantaneous in its operation. The same law also obtains in respect to good. Every good feeling and affection carried out towards others, is instantly rewarded by the inexpressible delight which everything good from the Lord bears within it. This law is thus expressed by the Lord:—"Give, and it shall be given to you again; good measure pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall men give into your bosom." (Luke vi. 38.)

From what has been said, we conclude that Future Rewards and Punishments are under the control of divine laws which originate in infinite Love and Wisdom. These laws, we have seen, are fully revealed in the Word, and are, like Him from whom they come, unchangeable. By complying with these laws we inherit the blessings annexed to their observance; but by disobedience and rebellion we inevitably incur the curse and punishment.

Finally, let us never forget that the power by which we can obey these laws, comes exclusively from the Lord, "without whom we can do nothing;" and that He effected the work of Redemption and glorified his Humanity chiefly that we might have the power to obey his precepts, and thus be saved.

I am, dear Sir, yours, etc.,

A. V.

LETTER XV.

GUARDIAN ANGELS AND EVIL SPIRITS, AND THEIR PROXIMITY TO MAN.

SIR:—The subject of Guardian Angels and Evil Spirits, and their proximity to Man, must be deeply interesting to the thoughtful mind; because it is not only so fully revealed in the Scriptures, but, as we shall see in the course of this Letter, so congenial to our higher rational conception and nature. The doctrine of Guardian Angels speaks home to the heart with peculiar emphasis, and awakens in our minds the most delightful emotions. To think that man can claim kindred with angels, and that, in the language of the poet, which is likewise the language of truth,

> "Angels are men, in lighter habit clad,"

and

> "Men are angels loaded for an hour," etc.

is a great cause of consolation.

There are two sources whence we derive all our knowledge respecting this subject. The one is Scripture, and the other is the rational exercise of the human mind on the subjects revealed. In the Scriptures we learn that the Lord "has given his angels charge over us to keep us in all our ways" (Psalm xci. 11); and that "the Lord commands his angels to encamp round about them that fear Him" (Ps. xxxiii. 7). We likewise learn that an angel came

and delivered Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego from the fiery furnace, so that not a single hair of their heads was singed. The angel of God likewise came and delivered Daniel from the lion's den.

When the people of Israel went through the wilderness "a pillar of a cloud went before them by day, and a pillar of fire by night;" and this pillar was expressly declared to be the presence of the Lord, and that they were delivered "by the ministry or presence of angels." That pillar of the cloud, then, was a phalanx of angels, represented in that peculiar form in order to show us that, as Israel was thus wonderfully guided and protected through the wilderness, so in like manner are we, whilst passing through this life, guarded in all our ways; and if the angels of God were not with us, we could not make a single step in advance towards his kingdom.

We read also that when the Lord himself came upon earth, "angels came and ministered unto Him" (Matt. iv. 11); and that angels were with Him in the most trying moments of his agony and temptation (Luke xxii. 43). That when He sweat as it were drops of blood during his agony in the garden, angels came and ministered unto Him; and as we follow the Lord "in the regeneration," angels come and minister unto us also. He indeed needed not ministering angels. He had all strength in himself, because "He had all power in heaven and on earth." But He permitted the angels to come and minister unto Him in order to show how it is with every man "who continues with Him in his temptations," that He also guards, watches and protects

him on every occasion by the ministry of his holy angels. He also declares to us that the "angels of little children do always behold the face of the Father which is in heaven," and that angels are with us at the period of death. For angels carried Lazarus into Abraham's bosom in heaven; they assisted, as it were, at the resurrection of Lazarus, and also at the resurrection of Dives; for universally, whether the man is good or evil, the angels of God never withhold their ministry of love, their service of salvation from him. We also know from the declaration of Scripture that the angels of God "rejoice over every sinner that repenteth;" that angels are with us when we are performing the duties of actual and genuine repentance: thus, when we are struggling with the evils of our corrupt nature, when we are overcoming temptations induced by evil spirits, angels are with us. It is they who inspire us from the Lord with every excellent motive. It is they who inwardly awaken all the sensitiveness of our conscientious nature. It is they who thus inspire the mind with encouragement and hope. We learn also that angels are with us in our acts of devotion and worship. Thus it is said in the 8th chapter of Revelation "that the angel took of the incense from the altar, and offered it up to God with the prayers of all saints."

Angels, therefore, are with us in our acts of worship; and although unseen by the eye of the body, they are yet present with us in our "inward man," and in all our higher sensibilities. We learn from the testimony already adduced, that angels are, in

the hands of God's Providence, mediums of every kind of good to us. They are the mediums of our safety. They are the mediums by which we are guarded against danger, and especially against evils of every kind. They are the mediums by which we are moved to genuine repentance, and by which our acts of worship ascend to the throne of grace. They are the mediums of strength to us in the hour of trial and temptation. "They bear us up lest we dash our feet against a stone." They are mediums universally of preservation to our infant race. We often wonder how it is that children who play in our streets are not more frequently destroyed by the dangers that surround them. Ah! there is a secret here which the Word of God unfolds! It is because they are mercifully and wonderfully protected from these dangers, and borne up, invisibly to us, by angels, lest they should suffer injury and death.

We also learn that angels are the mediums of good and of strength to man when he is assailed by any besetting sin. We feel that we are sometimes placed in a "strait (as says the Apostle) between two"—in a dilemma. We have our heart with its hereditary evil propensities bearing us downward; we have our higher sentiments bearing us upward. Oh! there are many struggles in the heart of man! There is the warfare between the internal and external; between the inward man "which rejoices in the law of God," and the outward man, between "the flesh and the spirit." Many a struggle will every good man feel, and blessed is he who does experience that struggle (James i. 12); for in the struggle he

will often experience that there are two counteracting powers, and that he himself in the centre has the decision in his own hand; but to pronounce the decision and cause it to take effect, is the especial combat of man as a "soldier of Christ." Here the angel of God comes to strengthen him; and if the victory be won the man himself becomes an angel. He partakes of the nature of angels, and becomes one with them. He has something more than what earth can give him—something more than what the world can bestow. His heart becomes open to heaven, and he is enrolled amongst "the company of the first-born and the spirits of just men made perfect."

We see, then, in all this, strong scriptural evidence that the Guardian Angel is not a mere chimera or metaphor of language, but as great a reality as anything can possibly be.

But in order to see this more clearly, we will inquire what is an angel; because we cannot properly see what angels are to us, except we know in some measure what an angel is. If we consult the Scriptures we shall see an angel defined and presented to us "as the spirit of a just man made perfect in heaven." An angel, then, is a man; and we are to conceive of him as such. He is a man not clothed with materiality, but a man in a spiritual humanity; for there is, says the Apostle, "a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." An angel is a man who has left the natural body, but who in the spiritual world is clothed with a *spiritual body*, consisting of spiritual substances, of which the human mind it-

self is formed, as explained in a former Letter; for, properly regarded, it is the spiritual form of a man existing within his natural form; and there is no philosophy at the present day so absurd in its character, as that of conceiving the human mind to be without substance or form. It is a substance more real and substantial than that of which our natural body consists, because it is a substance which is not subject to the laws of matter. It is a substance which is subject to the laws of mind, and these laws are distinct from the laws of matter. (See above, p. 175.) We think according to the laws of mind; we act according to the laws of matter. All our thoughts and affections belong to the spirit; all our words and actions belong to the body. The spirit of a man, therefore, as to its life, consists of his affections and thoughts; and affection and thought can no more exist without a substance and form, than vision can exist without an eye, hearing without an ear, or any of our sensations without the sensories in which the sensation is experienced. The spirit of man is in its nature most truly a substance, clothed whilst here with a material substance, in order that it may exist for a time in the world of nature, to perform there the uses which by creation it is destined to accomplish. That, says the Apostle, "is first which is natural: afterwards that which is spiritual." (1 Cor. xv. 46.) The *natural* therefore comes first, as the foundation of the building must be before the building itself. An angel as a spiritual being, was first a natural being, or a man in the

natural world, and prepared here to become an angel in heaven.*

We shall see this more clearly brought home to us if we reflect for what end we exist here? The proper answer to that question is, that we may exist "in the image and likeness of God," and that we may realize the light, life, wisdom, happiness, and love of God in ourselves. We live here, therefore, in order that we may be prepared for heaven hereafter. The world, then, properly regarded, is the seminary for heaven; the nursery whence the plants planted by the hand of our heavenly Father, shall be transplanted to his kingdom in heaven. This world, therefore, is especially a training-school for heaven. Every day we here live, that is not lived for heaven, is a day lost. And we live here for heaven if, whilst here, we endeavor faithfully to perform our duties to God and our duties one to another. The man who faithfully, that is, from a religious principle, performs his duty here, whatever be his vocation, is preparing to become an angel. Whilst he is engaged in his outer man in faithfully performing the duties of his employment or vocation here, the Lord, through the ministry of his holy angels, is engaged in building up his inner man to become an angel in his kingdom.

Angels, then, were always seen as men; but not men with wings. That is an idea which belongs to

* See the Postscript to this Letter, in which it is demonstrated that the common notion of the fall of angels has no ground in Scripture or reason to rest upon.

pure symbolism; and when mentioned in Scripture, is representative of the higher intelligence, wisdom and love in which an angel lives. To think, then, of an angel, we must think of a man in a higher state of perfection, who has lived in the world, and through the power and mercy of his God has performed his duty to his Creator and to his fellow-man; who has lived here the life of faith and love; who "has followed the Lord in the regeneration," and thus prepared himself here for his higher destiny hereafter.

That angels are our brethren is declared by the angel in the book of Revelation, where John, with a sense of awe, "fell down to worship the angel" who showed him the events recorded in that book. But the angel said, "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets." This, then, plainly shows us what an angel is; that he is a man with all the perfection of human nature in its highest sphere; having here had a material frame, which, "as flesh and blood can never enter the kingdom of God," is put off; but he is there "in a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." That house is his "spiritual body."

Angels were always seen as men throughout the Scriptures. Abraham saw the three angels that came to him on the plain of Mamre as three men. Lot saw the angels who came to him in the city of Sodom as men. Jacob saw the angels of God ascending and descending the ladder, and wrestled with one as a man. Gideon declares that he saw a *man* who commanded him to prepare the fleece in a cer-

tain way, as proof that he should be victorious over the Midianites. That *man* was the angel of God. Manoah also saw the angel of God as a *man*, who announced to him the birth of Samson. The two angels who were seen at the Lord's sepulchre were expressly called "*young men*." Moses and Elias were seen at the transfiguration of Jesus as *men;* and it is expressly said that "two men were with Jesus." Whenever, therefore, we think of angels, let us think of them as men. It is in agreement with Scripture evidence throughout; and it is in agreement with our higher rational perception.

When we come to examine our rational experience for proofs and illustrations of what we have advanced, we shall find that there are two universal facts and truths that press themselves most solemnly on our attention. The first is, that nothing that we behold or are acquainted with is made for *itself* exclusively, but that it is created for something out of itself, and that it looks to that something out of itself as the object which it is in its nature intended to serve and bless. Thus the father looks to the child out of himself as the object which he desires to bless and to love as one with himself; and in order that he may realize the child's happiness, he will deny himself even the necessaries of life that he may bless the object of his love. In like manner a good man looks to his fellow-man out of himself as the object whom he desires to bless. "None of us (says the Apostle) *liveth to himself*." (Rom. xiv. 7.) If you look at the structure of his eyes, you will find that the eye sees all objects around it, save one,—

that one is itself. He does not look to himself in the activities of his life, but to objects out of himself. I am aware that the selfishness of human nature can scarcely be brought to agree with this; yet it may be rationally brought home, and illustrated by a variety of facts.

In the kingdom of nature, for example, you will find that the whole of the mineral kingdom exists for something beyond itself; that something is the vegetable kingdom. It administers all its uses to the various kinds of vegetables. The vegetable kingdom, in like manner, does not exist for itself. It looks to a sphere beyond and out of itself. It looks to the animal kingdom, and all its wonderful provisions are poured forth for the use of that kingdom. But there is something beyond this which all the kingdoms of nature contemplate as their final object; that is, *man*. They all look to him as the object which they desire to benefit and bless. The mineral kingdom displays its mineral wealth in order that it may bless man. The vegetable kingdom displays its wealth and productions in order that it may bless man. The animal kingdom, in like manner, so far as it is of service to the human race—and even in so far as it is not of service, as with the venomous reptiles, the ferocious beasts, and the poisonous plants—all subserve in one form or another the interest and benefit of mankind. All look, therefore, to man. He is the world, the little world or microcosm to which they all refer. But this is not all; they look further. They look to their Creator through *man*, through whom as a rational, conscious

being, they are to be transferred to their Creator in acts of homage, love and worship. Then the whole circle from beginning to end is complete. We can go no further.

Now in all this wonderful system we notice that there is one thing existing for another, and that there are mediums from one thing to another from beginning to end. We see all this without any possibility of dispute in respect to man's life here in the world; and the inference to be drawn from this is, that it must be so in like manner with regard to man's spiritual relations;—that he is not only surrounded with blessings calculated to bless his "outer man," but with a wonderful system of blessings calculated to bless his "inner man." That system of blessings is the Spiritual World, and eminently the guardian angels with whom, through the providence and mercy of God, he is surrounded.

But the second thing as a universal truth, which I desire to press upon your intelligent readers, is this: that all things exist as mediums of good and blessing to other things. Man, for example, exists as a medium of good to his fellow-man. How wretched is that man who exists for himself alone! We call him a *miser*, from the word miserable; and truly he is a miserable wretch. Man acquires happiness in proportion as he goes forth into the world, and blesses others by the uses of the employment in which he is engaged. Thus there is not a single individual in the world who, by virtue of his office, however humble it may appear in the eye of the world, and by virtue of his employment, is not ca-

pable of being a medium of good to his fellow-man. This is the school of heaven; and where the mind is opened by the truth of the Gospel of Jesus to see this, and when the heart and the life are affected according to the knowledge perceived, the interiors of the mind are opened, and man is gradually transformed into "an image and likeness" of his Saviour God.

Now, I think we shall see that this is most reasonable, and that not only Scripture speaks plainly to us on this question, but our own rational experience will also show us the same great principle. And if it is a truth, how great is that truth! Let us for a moment glance at the practical nature of this truth. Every holy, disinterested and pure thought and affection which we cherish, is an indication of the presence of angels. Every disinterested act of love we perform—every act done for the good of our neighbor, is a proof of the presence of angels.

We may, therefore, bring this also, like every other doctrine of Christianity, to the test of experience. If it yield us spiritual profit, if it is good for our practical life, if by carrying it out it will make us better men, bring us to a higher platform in the kingdom of God, and make us love Him with a purer love, and our neighbor even better than ourselves, then we may rest assured "the doctrine is of God;" and trying this doctrine of Guardian Angels by this test, we shall find it to be eminently practical. We have already said that every holy, pure and sweet thought is an indication of the presence of good spirits and angels. How, then, ought

we to struggle against the opposite to these heavenly emotions? When we have the unholy thought, the sinister motive, if we struggle against it through the power of God in order that we may cherish the opposite, we may rest assured that "the angels of God are encamped round about us." This, then, is one of the practical tendencies of the doctrine before us.

Let us now briefly consider the nature of evil spirits. First we will inquire, What is an evil spirit? You will remember the definition we gave of an angel, which is "the spirit of a just man made perfect in heaven." An evil spirit is, consequently, the spirit of an unjust man, of an unregenerate man; of a man who has left the world through the gate of death without being prepared for the heavenly realm. If, for example, a man has made himself monstrous by a life of cruelty and brutality, and if he die in that state: if he has organized his mind to be monstrous in that character, how can a monster enter into the kingdom of God? Again: if a man by fraud, deceit and treachery has made himself into a viper—for the Lord calls those vipers who are hypocrites and deceitful—how can a viper with its venom enter into the kingdom of God? We might thus go through the whole catalogue of sinful depravities.

There is much knowledge required on the true nature of the human soul. It has been too often and too long thought by many that the human soul is a mere principle of thinking and willing, and at the same time unsubstantial and abstract in its na-

ture. This, viewed rationally and scripturally, is a most grievous error in the church and in the philosophy of the day. As already explained, the human soul is of a purer and infinitely more perfect substance than the body; but a substance of another character; a spiritual substance, as we see manifested to us in the Word of God. Thus it will be found that the spirit of a man is a spiritual organism, and that this organism assumes a form according to the governing principle that actuates it. If the governing principle be evil, the form of the spirit will be in harmony with the interior evil by which it is actuated. If the governing principle, for example, be avarice or an inordinate love of wealth, the form of that man will, as to his spirit, be precisely in harmony with the evil which he loves. Now if a man has lived here so as to organize his spirit or mind to be in harmony with some love or principle that is not in agreement with the kingdom of heaven, he cannot, after death, be re-organized. Where can he be reformed or re-organized? Here is the place for effecting it; here is the proper place for regeneration. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." "The Son of Man hath power *on earth* to forgive sins." When the earth is left by death the power to forgive or remit, that is, to remove sins, exists no longer. The man has contracted a nature in which he delights, and will not part with it. (See above, p. 166.)

For if a man has organized himself in a manner not suited to the heavenly world, how can he live there? If he have eyes not organized and fashioned

so as to see in the light of heaven, how can he endure that light? He will shun it, for he "loves darkness rather than light, because his deeds are evil." He will shun the presence of the angels of heaven, because his darkness is contrary to their light; and in like manner as to all his sensations. If he has lungs not formed to breathe the heavenly atmospheres, the fish might as easily live out of water, as for an evil spirit thus organized to dwell with his God. God does not remove the evil spirit from himself, but the evil spirit removes himself from God. God is always willing to receive sinners; but the man who loves sinful depravities will betake himself far from God, according to the nature of the depravity in which he is. It is therefore said, "He that is righteous let him be righteous still; he that is holy let him be holy still; he that is unjust let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy let him be filthy still." This is the declaration of the Word of God; and like the birds of night, the wicked will of their own accord shun the light of heaven. The delight of evil here has so fascinated them, that like the swine, they will of their own accord "wallow in the mire." The great object of religion is to raise us "from the dung-hill, and to seat us upon the throne of princes." (Psalm cxiii. 7, 8.) To know our delights, and in what we find our greatest gratification, is one of the most useful exercises in which the human mind can be engaged. An evil spirit, then, is a man in a state of degradation, evil, misery, and wretchedness, which during his lifetime here he

has brought upon himself, contrary to the designs of his Creator.

Now we read much of evil spirits in the Word of God. The Lord, when He came into the world, came expressly, as one of the great objects of redemption, "to cast out unclean spirits and devils." It was because, at the time He came into the world, evil had risen to such an ascendancy, that if He had not come to accomplish the work of redemption, "no flesh could have been saved." Redemption chiefly consisted in removing these evil influences; in subjugating their authority, and casting them out from man, and in thus delivering the human race from their infernal bondage. We likewise learn that "he healed those who were vexed with evil spirits." (Luke vi. 18.)

And this brings us to the practical nature of this subject. Every unholy and unworthy thought we cherish, is a proof of the proximity of evil spirits; for we derive no thoughts from ourselves. It is a mere fallacy to suppose that a man derives his thoughts from himself; as it is a mere fallacy to suppose that vision is inherent in the eye, or hearing in the ear. Did not the air vibrate and strike upon the ear, we should never hear. Did not the light act upon the retina, we should never see. And this is still more true with regard to the thoughts and the affections. If we think and act according to the principles of God's Word, then our thoughts are all derived from Him through the medium of angels; but if we think in opposition to the Word or the light of his divine truth, then our thoughts, what-

ever may be the outward appearance, are influenced more or less by the evil spirits with whom we are associated. Here, then, we see the truth of the Lord's declaration. When every insult was heaped upon Him, He said to the people around Him, "Now is your hour and the power of darkness." He saw the evil influences that actuated them, and associated them with their origin, "the power of darkness." So is it now.

Let us remember, then, if we desire to reduce this to practice, that every wrong and impure imagination, and especially every wrong motive and end we cherish, is a link between us and some evil spirit; and that that link can only be broken by the power of Jesus, that is, by the power of the Word of Jesus. Jesus acts by his Word (Matt. viii. 16), and if we follow his Word, He breaks that link and destroys this "confederacy with death" (Isaiah xxxiii. 15), and thus effects our individual redemption, as He accomplished the universal Redemption and Atonement of mankind. We may see, then, in the least, what is the effect in the greatest. One is the image of the other. In the drop of the ocean we behold the ocean itself in miniature; in the ray of light, the image of the sun itself. The individual redemption of man is an image of the universal redemption effected by our Saviour God.

In what manner, then, are we to act, so as to be secure on the one hand from evil spirits, and on the other to be associated with "ministering angels"? The only way is to look to the Lord in his Word. That is the only medium of deliverance from "the

powers of darkness," and the only medium of conjunction with the Lord himself. Let us, then, direct our eyes solely to Jesus in his Glorified Humanity, in which He is one with the everlasting Father, and the everlasting Father himself brought forth to our view. Let us look to Him as the sole source "of all power in heaven and on earth." Let us look to Him as the sole Fountain of Life, as the sole source of every pure and good and holy thought and affection. Let us seek Him in his Word, and when we find the truth there, let us remember that that truth has been sent to us to associate us with his kingdom, to bring us more under the influence of his guardian angels that encamp around us, and to remove as far as possible the "confederacy of hell and of death," and the influence of evil spirits. For it is Jesus alone who has the power to destroy their influence, and to deliver us from their cruel bondage.

I am, yours, etc. A. V.

POSTSCRIPT.

Angels not Created such.

It is a common belief that angels were created *as such* before man, and that certain angels fell, and introduced evil into the universe. I am aware that this belief rests rather upon Milton's "*Paradise Lost*," than upon any solid ground in Scripture. Still, the two passages in 2 Peter ii. 4, and in Jude 6, which speak of "the angels that sinned, and that

kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, and are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day"—these two passages require (as they appear to be the principal scriptural supports of the doctrine of the existence of angels prior to the creation of man), to be fully explained in reference to this subject.

It is of great interest to spiritual intelligence, and consequently to the spiritual life, to have scriptural and true ideas upon this subject. In order to supply corroborative evidence that these two passages in Peter and Jude have no reference to the common notion of the Fall of Angels, and that they, in consequence, give no countenance or support to the supposed existence of angels prior to the creation of man, we will adduce some striking proofs from the most esteemed interpreters of Scripture during the first four centuries of Christianity, when it is supposed, both by the Roman Catholics and by many amongst the Protestants, that Scripture was better understood than in after times. We are enabled to do this from the learned work of Dr. Tafel, entitled "A Comparative Statement and Critique of the Doctrines of Roman Catholics and Protestants, and of the Difference between them and the Doctrines of the New Church," etc.*

We will first show that the term *angel* (ἄγγελος) which signifies *one sent*, or a *messenger*, is by no means in Scripture confined to *angels* as inhabitants

* Vergleichende Darstellung und Beurtheilung der Lehrgegensätze, etc., Tübingen, 1835.

of heaven. This term immediately corresponds to the Hebrew מלאך, which signifies the same as the Greek term *αγγελος*, from which our word *angel* is derived, and denotes *one sent*, or a *messenger*. Thus in the Scriptures men are often called *angels;* in Numbers xx. 14, it is said that "Moses sent *messengers* from Kadesh unto the king of Edom," etc.; now the term *messengers* is rendered in the Greek version of the Septuagint by *αγγελους*, *angels*. See also Mal. iii. 1; Matt. xi. 10; Mark i. 2; Luke i. 17, vii. 27, where John the Baptist is called an *angel*. The disciples of John who were sent to inquire of Jesus are also called *angels*. (Luke vii. 24.) The messengers whom Jesus sent before Him into a village of the Samaritans are called *angels*. (See Luke ix. 52.) From these and from other passages which might be adduced, it abundantly appears from the Greek text, that the term *angels* is by no means confined to the inhabitants of the spiritual world, but that it is also applied to men, as well as to spirits who have been men.

Now the evident intention both of Peter and Jude, in the passage under consideration, is to show that "false teachers would come, yea, had come, among the Christians, who would privily bring in damnable heresies," etc.; and their object clearly was, to show that judgment and destruction would come over the Christian communities, if these "false teachers and damnable heresies" should prevail in leading them into "pernicious ways," etc.; that judgment and destruction would certainly overtake them in like manner as judgment and destruction

had overwhelmed all former Churches, beginning with the first, or the Church of Adam, whose members, when they had fallen, are called by Peter and Jude the "angels that sinned, and that kept not their first estate," etc. Judgment and destruction are also represented as overwhelming, on account of the same evils, the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, who, "in like manner as those"* (says Jude 7), namely, "as the angels which kept not their first estate," "gave themselves over to fornication, and went after strange flesh." Here the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah are represented as "*going after strange flesh*," *even in like manner as the angels that sinned.* Now it is quite evident that angels in heaven (who have not flesh and bones as men have, Luke xxiv. 39) cannot possibly go after "strange flesh," as the inhabitants of Sodom did; and therefore the *angels* mentioned by these apostles as having sinned, could not have been *angels in heaven*, but men upon earth; for these, *and not the former*, could "go after strange flesh and commit fornication." These passages, therefore, properly considered, by no means teach the common notion that "angels in heaven sinned, and kept not their first estate and

* The term τούτοις in verse 7 is, strange to say, omitted in the common version, although there is no ancient manuscript which authorizes this omission; wherefore after the clause "*in like manner*," the omission "*as those*," must be inserted in order faithfully to express the Greek text. Now, the only antecedent to "*as those*" is *angels* in the previous verse. When this fact is properly considered, our argument will be found indisputable. The Syriac version and Luther's have "*as those.*"

habitation;" but that the men of the most ancient church, described in the history of Adam and Eve, "*kept not their first or holy state, and left their habitation*" in Eden.

One reason, we apprehend, why a great misapprehension has arisen upon this subject, is not only from the conception so generally implanted in the mind respecting the Fall of Angels from heaven, but from the idea which is commonly entertained when angels are mentioned in Scripture. For in this idea *angels* (except when the angels of the devil and of the dragon are expressly stated) are always considered as denoting the inhabitants of heaven. That this, however, is not the case, but that the term *angels* is also frequently applied to denote men upon earth, we have already abundantly proved. In confirmation of this fact, see also James ii. 25 (Greek text), in which the term "messengers" is "angels."

Now, on comparing Peter and Jude together on this subject, so great is the similarity of their statements, that it is evident that they both had access to the same source of information, which was (as proved by the learned Semler) the Book of Enoch. That this ancient book, however, did not, when it speaks of the *angels that sinned*, mean *angels in heaven*, but the men of the most ancient church, or of the Adamic dispensation, was the current belief of the fathers of the first four centuries of Christianity—this we shall now proceed to show.

It was admitted by Augustin, Chrysostom, Cyrillus, Theodoret, and others, that the account given

in the Book of Enoch, and in the Epistles of Peter and Jude, of the *angels that sinned*, etc., relates exclusively to Gen. vi. 1-4:

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men, which were of old men of renown."

The expression, "*sons of God*," is rendered in some of the manuscripts of that ancient Greek version called the Septuagint, by "*angels of God;*" and as the Apostles, in their Epistles, quote this version, we see how it has arisen that Peter and Jude, when describing the judgment and destruction which came over the fallen men of the Adamic dispensation, allude to them as the *angels that sinned*, etc. We also see that "*the fornication and the going after strange flesh*," which, as we have seen, constituted the sin of the angels mentioned by Jude, evidently refers to what is said in the passage above, "that the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men," of whom giants and mighty men were born, denoting the direful persuasions of self-love, and the consequent perversion of all truths which then existed in the fallen church of Adam.

Now Augustin, a writer of great authority in the Primitive Church of Christianity, says:—

"I do not believe that when the Apostle Peter speaks of the '*angels that sinned whom God did not spare*,' he means the *holy angels* of God, who could by no means at that time fall; but that he speaks of those men who first, as apostates, fell away from God. For the same Holy Scripture abundantly shows that men of God are called *angels;* for, of John [the Baptist] it is written—Behold! I send my *angel* before thy face. And the prophet Malachi is called an *angel*. (ii. 7.) . . . Giants could have been born before the sons of God, who are also called [in the Septuagint] the angels of God, came in unto the daughters of men: namely, of the sons of Seth (Gen. v. 4) and the daughters of Cain." [Here Augustin quotes the passage above, Gen. vi. 1–4.]

He then proceeds:—

"For the persons [sons of God] here mentioned were not, as some suppose, the holy angels of God, as men are not; and it is not to be doubted that they were men; and this, Scripture itself, without any ambiguity, declares to be the fact. . . . The Septuagint version calls them, indeed, both the angels of God and the sons of God; that is, not all the manuscripts have *angels of God*, but some have *the sons of God*. But Aquila,* an interpreter, whom the Jews prefer to other Greek translators, has rendered it neither by *angels of God* nor by *sons of God*, but *sons of the gods*, according to what is said in Psalm lxxxii. 6—'I have said, ye are gods, and all of you children of the Most High.' Let us, however, omit the fables of those Scriptures which are called apocryphal, . . .

* The Greek version of Aquila was completed about the beginning of the second century. He died in 128.

although we cannot deny that Enoch has written some divine things, since the Apostle Jude, in his canonical epistle, refers to him."—Augustin. de civ. Dei xv., 23 ed. Bened. t. 7, p. 308, s.

But not only Augustin ; Chrysostom also, a Greek father of the greatest celebrity, in his Homily on Gen. vi. says :—

"That it is inconsiderate, absurd, and blasphemous, to say that in this passage *angels* and not men are understood. It is customary in Holy Writ to call men the *sons of God*, as the descendants of Enoch the son of Seth are called, because up to that time they had imitated the virtue of their ancestors ; whereas the descendants of Cain are called the *sons of men*." *

Cyrillus of Alexandria says :—

"The descendants of Enoch are [in Gen. vi.] called the sons of God, because up to that time they had kept themselves free from worldly-mindedness." He adds, "We must by no means suppose that the holy angels are here meant, to whom shameful licentiousness is ascribed." †

But another esteemed writer, Athanasius (or he who was the author of the *Questiones ad Antiochum*), says :—

"The sons of God (in Gen. vi.) are the sons of Seth [and not the holy angels], because a being not

* See Jo. Chrysost. in Cap. vi. Gen. Homil. xxii. Ed. Montfauc. t. 4, p. 195.

† Cyrillus Alex. Contra Julian ix. ed. Spanheim, 1606, p. 296.

clothed with flesh and bones (ασωματος) cannot love what is clothed with flesh and bones, nor can it approach unto women."*

Basilius, Bishop of Seleucias, who flourished at the beginning of the fifth century, and several others, might also be adduced for the same purpose. But our space will not permit us to proceed further.

We think it will now appear to the considerate reader that the *angels* mentioned by Peter and Jude are not to be understood *angels created as such*, because this, as we have shown, would be in contradiction to the context in Jude, who says that the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, *in like manner* as the angels, "went after strange flesh," etc.; but as angels in heaven are not clothed, as Athanasius says, "with natural flesh," therefore it is, as Chrysostom says, "absurd, yea, blasphemous, to believe that they could mingle with fleshly natures as the inhabitants of Sodom did."

But further, the common notion about angels, created as such, and their fall from heaven, of which notion these passages in Peter and Jude are supposed to be the principal support, is, as founded on the passage in Jude, directly opposed to what is said in Scripture respecting the Devil and Satan, who are supposed to be "the angels that sinned" mentioned by Peter and Jude. For this Apostle says that "these angels are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Now, the common notion, as an interpretation of

* Opp. Col., 1686, t. 2, Quest. 57, p. 332.

this passage, is directly opposed to what is said in the Revelation xx. 2, concerning the Devil and Satan, who are supposed to be the chief of these *fallen angels;* for it is there said that the Devil and Satan should be only first bound in chains a thousand years before the Last Judgment, after which "he would be loosed a little season." And again, if, as Jude says, the *angels that sinned* were bound in everlasting chains, how could the Devil, thus bound, be described "as going about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour"? (1 Pet. v. 8.) Viewing that passage, therefore, according to the common notion called orthodox, it makes the Scriptures contradictory. But viewing it according to the theology of the New Church, supported in this instance by the high testimony of Augustin, Chrysostom, and others—authorities which no Roman Catholic and but few Protestants will readily gainsay—it introduces harmony into Scripture; and the pious mind, when thinking on these important realities, can see in the light of Truth how this subject is to be understood.

A. V.

LETTER XVI.

A FEW MORE QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

SIR:—I perceive from your last paper that your correspondent C. D. "right cordially thanks me" for my replies to his questions.* As he is a Christian man, I am bound to give him credit for sincerity; and therefore I am not permitted, especially on a subject so important, to suspect him of irony. Indeed we have but little intelligence in spiritual and divine things, unless we can, in some degree satisfactory, answer the questions which he has put. I am, therefore, happy to find that he is satisfied with the answers. My intelligent opponent, however, wishes for further elucidation; and he consequently puts more questions which I will answer as briefly as possible.

1. My opponent says, "As the human form is the form of love and wisdom in a man, how comes it to pass that Palmer and his wretched successors in murder, possessed such a human form as other men?"

"In a man" means, of course, in a good man. Palmer was not a good man; consequently the form of love and wisdom from God, or of charity and faith, which is essentially the same thing, could not be in him. Palmer, it is true, had the *external* form

* See Letter XIII.

of a man; but his *internal*, or the form of his spirit, was that of a monster corresponding to his own evil. For the mind or spirit of a man, being a spiritual substance, assumes a form according to its quality; if regenerate and good, the form is perfectly and beautifully human; but if unregenerate and evil, the form of the spirit is monstrous according to the nature of the evil. He who knows "what is in man" (John ii. 25), sees this internal form, and pronounces accordingly. The external form, or the material body, is also frequently changed by the quality of the in-dwelling spirit; for the blood of a good man, as Swedenborg says, is in itself different from the blood of an evil man. If a man be plunged in sensualism, or addicted to drunkenness or brutality, does not his external in most cases appear hideous? But the material body of a man, having its own animal life, independent, to a considerable extent, of the moral qualities of his spirit, whether good or evil, is not the express image of the soul, as the spiritual form or body is; for this is entirely dependent on the governing quality of the soul, and it is its express image and likeness. The Lord who saw the interiors of men, beheld the Pharisees, however holy they might appear in externals to the multitude around them, as a "generation of vipers," and He designated them accordingly.

2. "What is the essential difference between matter and spirit?"

The essential difference between matter and spirit is the essential difference between mind and body;

for mind is spirit, and body is matter. As my opponent is not a materialist, he cannot deny this. The properties of a spiritual substance as distinguished from a material substance, I pointed out in a former letter and will not here repeat them.

3. "As the organized form of a man's spirit consists, like the body, of innumerable parts so organized and arranged as to constitute a harmonious *one*, may we not ascribe the property of divisibility to man's spirit?"

Divisibility as applied to matter cannot be ascribed to man's spirit; but in the sense of mental *analysis* it may be ascribed to the spirit. For the mental operation called *analysis* corresponds to the anatomical operation called *dissection*. Thus we may analyze our mental faculties and distinguish our memory from our imagination, our reason from our will, etc. We can also analyze an idea, which is a property of spiritual substance, examine what it contains, and see whether it be true or false, good or evil, etc. We can also resolve an intellectual problem into its component parts, and see its true nature, etc.

4. "As the goodness which comes from God is a *substance*, may I ask whether it be a hard or a soft substance, a large or a small substance?" etc.

Goodness and Truth from God, as being his essential "Divine Nature" (2 Peter i. 4), are the origin of all substances and forms in the universe of being, whether they be spiritual or natural. We cannot, as shown in a former letter, predicate what is material of this "Divine Nature" or Substance, except

by way of correspondence or analogy, as is the case in the Scriptures. We read of the *great* goodness of God, but we do not mean *great* in the sense of *size* or *bulk*, which can be measured by miles or furlongs, or weighed by pounds or tons. We designate the goodness of our fellow-men by expressions taken from natural objects, and we say that the kindness or goodness of a friend was *great*, *profound*, *intense*, etc.; but we do not mean that these expressions should be taken in their material or physical sense, which can be measured, weighed or sounded, etc., but by an instinctive process of thought we instantly understand them in another sense as applicable to a spiritual substance.

Again, when we predicate *softness*, *gentleness*, *sweetness*, etc., of a person's heart and disposition, we do not employ these expressions, although taken from material things, in a material sense, but in a spiritual sense, as said of a spiritual substance, which is the mind or spirit of which these dispositions are predicated. The same is the case when we speak of a hard, stiff, refractory, unyielding heart or temper, etc.; we do not use these terms in their merely physical sense, but in a spiritual sense adapted to the spirit.

Permit me here to observe that the entire Word of God is inspired and written according to this law of correspondence between natural things and spiritual. For Jesus "spake nothing without a parable," which evidently means that He employed natural things to express spiritual things; and when we know the spiritual meaning involved in the parable,

or in the natural emblem, we know the true meaning of God's Word, and not before. A doctrine that is founded upon the *symbol*, and not upon the thing *symbolized*, is a fallacious, and if confirmed, is a false doctrine. All false doctrine, such as transubstantiation, the tri-personalism of the Athanasian creed, and others that might be mentioned, have originated in this way.

As to the form of the deceiver and liar, to whom my opponent alludes in this question, I must refer him to the answer to the first question above.

5. "What are the properties of what is good and true?"

The properties of what is good and true are the properties of a pure spiritual substance, as benevolence, holiness, mercy, justice, etc., as explained in my former letter. See also above, the answer to question 4.

6. "As spiritual substances are actuated according to the nature of their forms, what is the nature of those forms?"

The nature of those forms is either good or evil; if they receive God's life or in-flowing spirit which actuates them, without perverting it, their nature is good; but if they pervert it, their nature is evil. If we have faith in the Lord, and live according to his commandments, and thus love Him above all things, and our neighbor as ourselves, the forms of our spiritual nature or organization are heavenly; but if we live an evil life of unbelief and wickedness, the forms of our spiritual organization are infernal.

7. "As it is a great fallacy to suppose that mercy, charity, faith, etc., are the properties of the human body, will A. V. oblige by informing us *who*, or what curious beings indulge in so fallacious a supposition?"

The "curious beings" who indulge in such a supposition are all kinds of materialists, both of the German and French schools, and also the socialists and infidels of our own country. All who deny a spiritual substance, or man's spirit consisting of spiritual substances, and the properties peculiar thereto as distinct from the properties of matter, howsoever they may profess themselves to be Christians, are, in reality, advocating the cause of the materialist and the infidel. The theology and philosophy of the New Jerusalem is the only system that can effectually deliver the mind from materialism and all kinds of infidelity.

8. "As by the spiritual *body* is meant the spiritual *form* of the soul, are we to understand that body and form are one and the same thing?"

Body and form are the same thing, or as shape in relation to substance. The material body of a man is his form by which he is known in the world. The spiritual body is the form of his spirit, by which after death he is known in the spiritual world. "There is," says the Apostle, "a natural body and there is a spiritual body." The Apostle uses the expression "there is" in the present tense, showing that there is *now* a spiritual body, which is clothed in the world with a material body. This spiritual form or body, consisting of spiritual substances, must not be conceived of as *rarefied matter*, but as a substance com-

pletely distinct from matter, and altogether of another kind, and subject to another system of laws, which are not material but spiritual. Thus the spiritual body does not exist in *continuity* or *continuous* with the natural body, but it exists, so long as a man lives in the world, in *contiguity* or *contiguous* with the natural body. The glove on the hand does not exist *continuous* with the hand, but *contiguous* to it, and thus separable from it. In like manner, but in a way infinitely more perfect, the natural body is but the covering of the spirit, which, when the body dies, is in its own form, and appears in its own world.

The law by which the union of the spirit and the body is preserved, is that of correspondence and influx. When this correspondence is broken or dissolved, man is said to die, and the natural body, like an old or worn-out glove, falls on the earth, and the living form within still lives, but in a world above nature, which is called the spiritual or eternal world. My intelligent opponent will, now that he has looked favorably upon the answers to his previous questions, see "that the spirits of just men in heaven are already perfect" (*teteleiomenon*); because they are in their spiritual bodies, and consequently have no need of the resurrection of clay and dust at the supposed general resurrection, to make them perfect.

With a due appreciation of your kindness and liberality in allowing us to present to your readers this brief exposition of our doctrines and sentiments,

I am, dear Mr. Editor,

Yours right truly, A. V.

LETTER XVII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

SIR:—It has been demonstrated that the prevailing theology is not more true in relation to the Word of God, than the Ptolemaic system of astronomy which prevailed up to the time of Copernicus, Galileo and Newton, was true in relation to the heavens which it pretended to explain. That system was, it is now universally admitted, founded on *fallacies*. But the system of astronomy founded on genuine scientific truths now prevails, and the time is coming when the true theology, accompanied by an enlightened mental and spiritual philosophy, founded not on appearances, or, what is worse, on "the vain traditions of men," but on genuine truths drawn purely from the Word of God, will also prevail. Men, in proportion as they rise above selfishness and worldliness, are sighing and longing for a new development of truth from the Scriptures; and their sighing hearts will meet with satisfaction in the Church of the New Jerusalem.

My last opponent, who has now sought refuge in flight, has not presented a single argument, either from Scripture or reason, against any of my statements; but he has sought to defend the citadel of which he was the professed champion, by irony and abuse. It is well known that when an opponent has recourse to such weapons, his cause is hopeless. In

answering his questions on subjects so solemn and important, I was bound to give him credit as a Christian for sincerity and candor. He no doubt imagined that his questions could not be answered; but he knew nothing of the light of intelligence which shines in the Church of the New Jerusalem. Questions still more profound than he can put, may be satisfactorily solved in the light of the New Church. Even his friends must see that he is defeated. Are there not larger heads and stronger hands in the ranks of orthodoxy, so called, to whom the tri-personal doctrine of the Athanasian creed, and the theology founded thereon, can be entrusted? If not, let them come over to the City of the New Jerusalem, which they will find as a city so "compact together" from beginning to end,—from its foundation upwards to its turrets and pinnacles,—that no enemy can assail it with any prospect of success.

But my opponent, before he finally disappears, asks one more question:—

"Can you imagine," says he, "a missionary of these views of the New Jerusalem, standing among a crowd of subtle Hindoos, and announcing, as the philosophy of Christianity, that man has two bodies, the visible physical one, and an invisible spiritual one;—that the Great Eternal clothed himself in this twofold veil, etc.? for the mind refuses to follow out this strain of absurdities and blasphemies."

In answer to this, we have simply to quote the declaration of the Apostle Paul, whose authority, I am sure, my opponent himself will admit. "There

is," says the Apostle, "a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." What is this but a direct answer, in the affirmative, to his questions in respect to man? But in respect to the Lord, or the Great Eternal, cannot my opponent see that on the mount of Transfiguration He clothed himself in his twofold veil? Does not the Lord here present himself under two bodily aspects, the one with his "face shining as the sun" and the other in his ordinary appearance, quite distinct? In the former He appeared in his "Glorious Body," or Divine Humanity, and in the latter as "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." In the former He was the "Son of God," but in the latter He was the "Son of Mary." And when the "Son of Mary" died, the "Son of God" arose; that is, when the Lord put off, by the death on the cross, the infirm humanity from the mother, He put on in its place and in its stead the Divine Humanity, or "Glorious Body" from the Father within Him, in which He now is, as the Apostle says, "God over all, blessed forever" (Rom. ix. 5), the only true Object of worship to angels and men, because "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. ii. 9.)

We solemnly ask, Is there any "absurdity or blasphemy" in this "twofold veil," or in these two bodily aspects? Verily, my opponent clearly evinces that he requires more light to enable him to understand the Gospel, and to see the truth as it is in Jesus; otherwise he would not pronounce as "absurd and blasphemous," what the Lord and his Apostle so clearly teach.

But we might, in truth, ask C. D., What do subtle Hindoos say to the missionary when they ask him "whether the woman was really made out of the rib of the man?—whether the serpent did really speak to the woman, and reason with her?—whether Balaam's ass did really expostulate with the prophet"? When they again ask him, "How can three divine persons, each by himself being God and Lord, make one God, or how could Jehovah who is infinite in goodness and mercy, reject the human race in anger, and could only be appeased and atoned by the sufferings and blood of his own Son, co-equal and co-eternal with himself?"—What does the missionary say when asked by the subtle Hindoos to answer these questions? Why, it is on record, that the missionary cannot answer them; and the Hindoo consequently remains in his Pagan darkness, and clings more closely than ever to his heathenism.

Why cannot the missionary answer these questions, together with many others which might be mentioned? because the missionary, trained up in a false theology which cannot teach him the true nature of God's Word, nor the principles of its interpretation, is not able to answer the Hindoo. But not so the missionary of the Church of the New Jerusalem. He, knowing the nature of God's Word and the principles of its interpretation, can answer these questions; and where there is the good ground of an honest heart, he can convert the Hindoo to Christianity—not to the Christianity of a false church, but to the Christianity of the pure Church of Christ, which is that of the New Jerusalem. I

refer you, Sir, to the "Intellectual Repository, or New Jerusalem Magazine," for this very month (Sept., 1856, page 425), where you will find a letter from a Hindoo, converted to the New Church, entreating us to send missionaries and books to India, alleging that the Hindoos can understand the Scriptures as interpreted by the doctrines of the New Church, but that they cannot understand them by means of the theology so generally taught in Europe. This fact speaks volumes in behalf of the doctrines of the Church of the New Jerusalem, and ought seriously to affect thinking men, and lead them to inquire into the claims of these doctrines.

And now, Sir, permit me to appeal once more to your numerous and intelligent readers.

The subjects discussed in these letters have covered a large field of Christian intelligence, and a debt of gratitude which will not be forgotten, is due to you for having opened your pages to the free discussion of so many subjects of Christian theology. Throughout the controversy, I think you will admit that I have faithfully observed the conditions you laid down for the guidance of the disputants, and that I have closely adhered to the postulates upon which the discussion should be conducted, "that every point should be drawn exclusively from the Word of God, and confirmed thereby." This was agreed upon by my first opponent C. B., and for a time the discussion went on in a way in which two Christian gentlemen should conduct it. But when irony, invective and empty declamation are substituted, as by my last opponent, for sound scriptural and

rational argument, it is time that he should decamp and quit the arena. He has done so.

I am now in your hands; and if permitted, I shall be happy, on account of its eminent uses, to discuss any other subject of doctrine, and to answer any questions pertaining to Christian theology and philosophy, which your readers, in a proper spirit, may think proper to propose. I am certain that from a sense of justice to your neighbor, you will not allow me to be assailed without giving me an opportunity to reply. Quoting your motto, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is *charity*," permit me to say that no greater act of Christian charity can be performed than that of making known to others the Truth as it is in Jesus; for it is by the reception and love of this Truth that we are saved. (2 Thess. ii. 10.)

By your liberality as a Christian editor you have set an example to the Christian community, who, if they would permit themselves to examine what others, outside of the narrow limits of their own Thirty-nine Articles, or outside of their own denomination, have to say in respect to the everlasting Gospel of Jesus Christ, would not debar themselves from very much that might bless them with a rich measure of Christian intelligence, blessedness and peace.

Sincerely thanking you for your kindness and liberality,

I am, yours right truly, A. V.

THE END.

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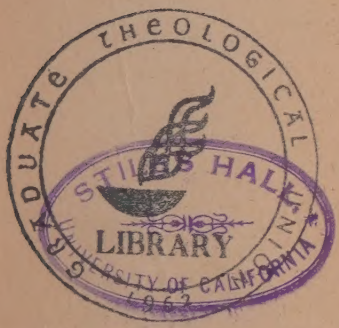

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